IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON THE BRAND IMAGE OF A HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION

By

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I, Ilze Visser 207051192, hereby declare that the dissertation for the Magister Commercii degree in Business Management is my own work and that it has not previously been submitted for assessment or completion of any postgraduate qualification to another University or for another qualification.

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ABSTRACT

Social media is an unexplored and new area, for both businesses and academia. Many institutions are not confident on how to improve their business through the use of social media, neither for internal or external purposes. Social media is nevertheless immense among private persons (Wikström & Wigmo 2010:1) and to ignore this would be a critical mistake by marketing communicators, regardless of the economic sector in which they operate. Therefore, this study intended to expand on the current limited knowledge and information available relating to the use of social media by Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) to improve their brand image.

The primary objective of this research was to evaluate and empirically test the impact of selected Brand identity variables (Brand reputation, Brand relevance, Brand personality, Brand performance and Brand relationship) on the Brand image of a HEI, through the use of social media. The focus was on the impact of social media (Facebook) on the brand image of a Higher Education Institution (HEI), namely the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU), which was used as the sample for this study.

In the literature study five underlying independent variables (Brand reputation, Brand relevance, Brand personality, Brand performance and Brand relationship) were indentified and hypothesised as influencing the intervening variable, Brand identity, as well as the dependent variable, Brand image. Each of these constructs were clearly defined, explained and contextualised.

The respondents for this study were identified by means of the convenience sampling technique, where each respondent was given a self-administered prearranged questionnaire to complete on two separate occasions. During the first phase of data collection 348 questionnaires were sent out to two sample groups namely the control group (registered and non-registered Facebook users) and the experimental group (students who ‘like’ the NMMU Facebook page). This method is known as a quasi-experimental design. During this first phase data was collected from 97 useable questionnaires. On the 13th of September 2011 the researcher started with the first Facebook postings to the experimental group only. The
Facebook postings were made from 13 September 2011 to 13 October 2011 with an average of two to five postings being made daily, ranging from general postings about the university, explanations on the logo and slogan of the university, achievements of the university and its students, to asking questions, as well as the visual description of the university through photos and links. The primary aim of making these Facebook postings were to attempt to change and improve the image that the students in the experimental group had about the NMMU brand through viewing and considering these postings and information placed on Facebook. During the second phase of data collection 98 questionnaires were sent out to the two sample groups, namely the control group (registered and non-registered Facebook users) and the experimental group (students who ‘like’ the NMMU Facebook page). During this second phase data was collected from 47 useable questionnaires and this data was subjected to various statistical analyses. The statistical analyses utilised included the execution of an exploratory factor analysis, Multiple Regression analyses, quasi-experimental design analyses as well as the calculation of Cronbach Alpha coefficients to confirm the validity and reliability of the measuring instrument.

Of the five independent variables in the study (Brand reputation, Brand relevance, Brand personality, Brand performance and Brand relationship), all loaded as expected and were confirmed by the exploratory factor analysis. The dependent variable, Brand image, and the intervening variable, Brand identity, also loaded as expected.

The following independent variables have been identified as influencing the dependent and intervening variables namely:

- Brand reputation,
- Brand relevance,
- Brand personality,
- Brand performance, and
- Brand relationship.
Furthermore, the results of the Multiple linear regression results for the experimental group (students who ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook) indicated a noticeable difference between the ‘before’ intervention and ‘after’ intervention data. This indicated that the intervention through Facebook and the use of social media indeed had a positive influence on the experimental group’s respondents and contributed to these respondents having enhanced views and perceptions about the NMMU brand. These results also contributed to the all six formulated hypotheses for this study being accepted (Table 6.41).

This study contributed to the body of knowledge on social media usage by HEIs to effectively brand and market their institutions in South Africa by identifying the most significant branding elements that influence the perceived brand image of a HEI. This research also made a significant contribution to the field of social media as well as branding research through the development of an entirely new form of research methodology that investigated the impact that social media have on the brand image of a HEI.

**KEYWORDS:**
Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), Social media, Brand reputation, Brand relevance, Brand personality, Brand performance, Brand relationship, Brand identity, Brand image.
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND PROBLEM STATEMENT OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Human beings are social beings and have a fundamental need to communicate and to build, preserve and improve social relationships. This statement is exemplified through the considerable success of the latest communication media such as mobile telephones, email and short messaging services (SMS) (Ijsselsteijn, Van Baren & Van Lanen 2003). These insights on social beings and their social relationships can however be traced back to the time of Aristotle and earlier. The theory of human needs of the 1950s, developed by Maslow, demonstrates that in order to be able to satisfy human needs at several levels, social interactions are essential, particularly the need for love, belonging and self-esteem (Ijsselsteijn et al. 2003). From this it is evident that the formation of social relationships facilitates the satisfaction of the above mentioned needs. The important role that social networks play in our daily lives cannot be underestimated. Human beings communicate and share information through social relations with family, friends, business partners, colleagues and/or collaborators (Matsuo, Mori & Hamasaki 2006).

Peoples’ contact across space and time has been notably extended by new media technologies. These technologies allow one to network with groups and individuals that are beyond ones immediate physical surroundings (Ijsselsteijn et al. 2003). A service that recently received a great deal of attention on the Web is the rapidly growing social networking services, which is a form of online application. These social networking services are particularly useful for users to register their personal information as well as their friends and acquaintances on these networks. These networks encourage information sharing such as the uploading of photos, sending messages, reading weblogs as well as research and academic notes (Matsuo et al. 2006).
Some of the most popular social networking sites currently on the Internet include Orkut, YouTube, Flickr and Facebook. Individuals who utilise these sites build social networks and these networks enable them to share, organise and find contacts and content (Mislove, Marcon, Gummadi, Druschel & Bhattacharjee 2007:1).

Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) globally are also setting off on embracing social media and recognising their potential power as an element of their overall marketing mix. Facebook, MySpace, YouTube, Flickr, Twitter, blogs and del.icio.us are amongst the most popular forms of social media (Reuben 2008:1). Social media consist of activities involving the process of networking and socialising online through pictures, words and videos. Social media is reshaping the way in which we communicate with one another as humans and how we relate to the organisations that serve us (Reuben 2008:1). Social media is about dialog, which is the two-way discussion that brings together individuals to discover and share information (Reuben 2008:1).

Over the past decade, there has been an increasing level of enthusiasm for the fundamental role that the Internet can play within Higher Education, not least as a means of presenting students with ready access to educational prospects (Selwyn 2008:11). In particular, the Internet has been positioned by universities’ organised efforts to provide students access to the information required for their studies and to deliver subject content (Selwyn 2008:11). Selwyn (2008:12) states that the current group of undergraduate students are said to be drawn from the first generation of ‘digital natives’, who grew up with the Internet and as a result are totally comfortable to utilise online sources in order to satisfy their information needs.

In her Blog, Falkow (2010) highlights the fact that most individuals are still considering universities, as well as the academic world, as being conservative in their marketing and communication approaches, while in actual fact they are a long way ahead of business in terms of social media adoption. It has been found that ninety-five percent of American universities and colleges are currently using at least one form of social media when recruiting prospective students (Falkow 2010).
Researchers have noted that today’s students entering HEIs possess a different view of technology due to their lifelong engagement with a media-rich, digital and networked world. These learners, who are immersed in this digital world and follow a digital lifestyle, are referred to as millennials. The millennials have expectations of education as a participative, engaging and active environment (Siemens 2008:6).

In 2005 the restructuring of HEIs in the Eastern Cape Province took place where this restructuring was manifested through the first phase incorporation of the Vista University in Port Elizabeth with the University of Port Elizabeth and then the merger between the University of Port Elizabeth and the Port Elizabeth Technikon. This merger resulted in the establishment of a new university, the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU) that came into existence on 1 January 2005. In her study, Han (2006) researched the impact that Brand identity has on the perceived Brand image of the NMMU, by questioning whether the new Brand identity of the newly established NMMU impacts the perceived Brand image of the NMMU. Han (2006) investigated this impact by considering all the stakeholders who has an interest in the institution, such as academic, administrative and technical staff; alumni; parents of students; the local business community as well as the local and provincial governments (Han 2006:1-2).

The purpose of this research is to determine how the Brand image of a Higher Education Institution (HEI), with the NMMU as the sample for the study, is influenced through the use of social media. In order to determine this influence the study will focus its efforts on using Facebook as the preferred social networking site to obtain the research results. Facebook was established in 2004 and in 2007 it was reported that this social networking site had more than twenty one million members who were registered on the site (Ellison, Steinfield & Lampe 2007). Facebook can be described as a site that facilitate its users to present themselves in an online profile, where they accumulate friends who can post comments on one another’s pages as well as having the ability to view each other’s profiles. Other features of Facebook includes that it allows its members to join virtual groups that were based on common interests; identify which classes they and other members have in common, as well as to learn one another’s interests, musical tastes, hobbies and romantic relationship status through the profiles (Ellison et al. 2007). HEIs can use Facebook to create a
profile for themselves and utilise its profile as a way of informing its students about who they are, what they stand for and also various aspects of the institution, such as where it is situated and contact details of the various departments. Furthermore, Facebook can also be utilised by HEIs and its students to obtain information about the activities of friends, social information about peers as well as information on social events taking place.

When considering a HEI, the brand perceptions and associations can be seen as those held by students and other stakeholders. One of the single most important assets of an institution has been identified by well-known brand literature as that of Brand image (Han 2006:7). Consequently, the improvement and preservation of Brand image is of paramount importance for a HEI (Han 2006:8).

1.2 PROBLEM DEFINITION

Social media is an unexplored and new area of research for both businesses and in the academic world. Many institutions are not confident on how to improve their business through the use of social media, neither for internal or external purposes. Social media is nevertheless immense among private persons (Wikström & Wigmo 2010:1) and to ignore this would be a critical mistake by marketing communicators, regardless of the economic sector in which they operate.

Online social networks are already at the heart of some exceedingly well-liked Web sites. Additional applications can be expected to emerge as technology matures. It is also possible that social networking will play an essential role in future business-related and personal online interaction, along with the location and organisation of information and knowledge (Mislove et al. 2007:3).

To the knowledge of the researching team it was the first study of its nature to be conducted and therefore difficulty was experienced in developing the appropriate research methodology to implement the research and data collection.

In South Africa very little research attention has been given to the use of social media by businesses in general and HEIs in particular in order to improve their
Brand image. Therefore, this study intends to expand on the current limited knowledge and information available relating to the use of social media by HEIs to improve their Brand image. The focus will be on the impact of social media (Facebook) on the Brand image of a HEI, namely the NMMU, which will be used as the sample for this study.

1.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

This research focuses on how a range of branding elements, amongst others, Brand reputation, Brand relevance, Brand personality, Brand performance and Brand relationship, influence the Brand image of a HEI through the use of social media.

The primary objective of this research is twofold: Firstly, to design and follow a relatively new methodology to establish whether the use of social media has any impact on how the Brand image of a HEI is perceived and enhanced. Secondly, to evaluate and empirically test the impact of selected branding elements on the Brand image of a HEI, through the use of social media, as well as to make recommendations in order to successfully utilise these branding elements when marketing a HEI.

In an attempt to achieve the primary objective of this study, the following secondary objectives have been formulated:

a) To embark on an in-depth theoretical study on:
   - Branding and the various branding elements involved in branding a HEI; and
   - The impact that social networking sites have on the Brand image of a HEI.

b) To propose a hypothesised model identifying branding elements that will have an impact on the Brand image of a HEI.

c) To undertake an empirical investigation to test the influence of selected independent variables on the perceived Brand image of the NMMU through the intervention of social media.

d) To make recommendations that could aid HEIs’ marketers to successfully brand their universities through the use of social media.
1.4 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study is to determine and enhance the key branding elements, namely Brand reputation, Brand relevance, Brand personality, Brand performance and Brand relationship that influence the Brand image of a HEI, through the use of social media. Primary as well as secondary research will be conducted to accomplish the objectives of this research.

1.4.1 SECONDARY RESEARCH

A comprehensive literature search will be conducted in order to determine the various key branding elements necessary to successfully market a HEI as well as their influence on the Brand image of the institution (university). National and international data searches will be conducted. In order to thoroughly conduct the literature search an assortment of secondary sources, such as written publications (such as textbooks and journal articles), online sources (e-journals and website articles) as well as previous studies on social media, social networking and the use of social media in HEIs will be conducted (Finkelstein 2010:6; Visser & Strydom 2010:4-5).

1.4.2 PRIMARY RESEARCH

The primary research of this study will involve four subsections, namely identifying the most appropriate research paradigm; scale development; sampling and data collection; as well as the techniques used to analyse the data collected.

1.4.2.1 Research paradigm

A positivistic (quantitative) research paradigm will be implemented for the purpose of this study. The validation for utilising the positivistic (quantitative) research paradigm relates to its central concern, being the gathering of the actuality behind and the causes of occurrences. This research paradigm can also be seen as possessing
exceptional qualities such as precision, comprehensiveness and quantitative (Coetzer 2008:48; Visser & Strydom 2010:5). The primary objective of this research will be to evaluate and empirically test the impact of selected branding elements on the Brand image of a HEI, through the use of social media. This research paradigm is applicable because this situation results in a bigger sample where data collection through the use of a questionnaire will be more effective.

1.4.2.2 Scale development

Each individual factor that will be exposed to investigation will be operationalised by way of valid and reliable items obtained from validated measuring instruments used in prior empirical studies. Self-generated items identified through secondary sources will also be used to empirically test the factors. As proposed in the hypothesised model the items will be rearticulated to make them more appropriate for the current study.

1.4.2.3 Sampling and data collection

An extensive empirical study will be used to test the hypothesised model proposed for this study. In order to identify the respondents that will participate in the study a convenience sampling technique will be employed. A convenience sampling procedure can be defined as one that use those entities or people that are most conveniently available for use in this particular sample (Visser & Strydom 2010:6; Zikmund 2003:380). The database used for this study will comprise of the experimental group, which includes the profiles and email addresses of the individuals who are registered on Facebook and ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook as well as those students registered and non-registered Facebook users at the beginning of the research and who will be participating as the control group. Therefore, the primary sampling units acquired from the convenience sampling procedure will be the 197 students who are registered and non-registered Facebook users, while the sample size for the experimental group comprised of 151 students who ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook
The data for the study will be collected from August 2011 to November 2011, by posting branding-related statements as well as statements relating the general aspects of the university on the NMMU page, aimed at soliciting responses from the respondents. In order to conduct the study the researcher will employ the survey technique, where the researcher will send the questionnaire to the database members’ inbox on Facebook and the email addresses of the non-registered respondents. The respondents of the study, identified as the people who are registered on Facebook and ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook (experimental group) and the people who is not registered on Facebook (control group), will be given a self-administered prearranged questionnaire in August 2011 before the study commences, in order to determine how the Brand image of the NMMU is perceived by its students before presenting them with information that can influence their perception of the brand.

The first section of the questionnaire, section A, will comprise of statements relating to the use of branding elements and social media as well as the Brand image of the NMMU in order to gain insight into the views and perceptions of the respondents. A seven-point Likert-type interval scale will be employed in the questionnaires. By using this interval scale the respondents of the study will be invited to indicate the extent of their conformity with each statement used in the questionnaire. The researcher will focus on acquiring the demographic details relating to the personal details of the respondent as well as details relating to their use of social media in general and the social networking site, Facebook in particular in Section B and C of the questionnaire.

During the period of September 2011 and October 2011 the researcher will post status updates aimed at the experimental group on a daily basis on the social networking site, Facebook. The status updates will relate to the NMMU brand, activities taking place at the NMMU, facilities of the university as well as general information relating to the university, in the form of graphics, links, words and videos.

After the two to three month period has elapsed, the respondents (the experimental and control group) will be given the same questionnaire that they completed before the study started in order to determine how the views and perceptions of the
respondents who has been exposed to the statements have changed in the two to three month period, as well as to determine whether the views and perceptions of those who was not exposed to the statement has changed. Throughout the two to three month period of the study, the researcher will also keep track of the number of people who ‘like’ or ‘comment’ on the status updates posted on the NMMU page, by means of the graphs and hit rates, obtained from Facebook Insights. These graphs will also give the researcher an indication as to who are active users and who are inactive users.

1.4.2.4 Data analysis

The accumulated data obtained from the questionnaires completed by respondents in both August 2011 and November 2011 will be exposed to multiple statistical analyses, such as exploratory factor analysis and the calculation of Cronbach Alpha coefficients. These statistical results will be used in order to measure the discriminant reliability and validity of the measuring technique, respectively. The data obtained in the data collection phase will also be exposed to quasi-experimental design analysis by calculating the p-values of each factor identified in this study. These p-values will provide an indication of whether the factor is statistically significant or statistically insignificant.

Although the focus of this study is to measure and determine the Brand image of a HEI through the use of social media, the influence of various single item demographic variables will also be measured. This will be done by means of a Cronbach Alpha coefficients, Multiple Regression analyses and t-tests. In each case, the influence of the demographic variables, as independent variable, will be measured on dependent variables.

1.5 PROPOSED HYPOTHESISED MODEL AND HYPOTHESES

Figure 1.4 illustrates the impact that the branding elements, namely Brand reputation, Brand relevance, Brand personality, Brand performance and Brand relationship, have on the dependent variable, namely the Brand image of a HEI.
It can be indicated that the hypothesised model (Figure 1.1) signifies that Brand identity act as the intervening variable among the dependent variable, Brand image, and the independent variables, namely Brand reputation, Brand relevance, Brand personality, Brand performance and Brand relationship.

The Brand image of an institution has been regarded in branding literature as possibly the single most essential asset of any institution (Han 2006:7). Consequently, the maintenance and enrichment of the Brand image is of highest importance, especially for a HEI, such as the NMMU. This also highlights the importance of periodic Brand image assessments (Han 2006:7).

**Figure 1.1: Proposed hypothesised model**

Source: Adapted from Han (2006:7).
1.5.1 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Given the purpose and the primary objectives of this study, the following research questions are proposed:

(i): What is the impact of Brand identity on the Brand image of a HEI?

(ii): Does the use of social media (specifically Facebook) impact on the perceived Brand image of a HEI?

(iii): Is there a relationship between Brand identity and Brand image?

(iv): Is there a positive relationship between Brand reputation and Brand identity?

(v): Is there a positive relationship between Brand relevance and Brand identity?

(vi): Is there a positive relationship between Brand personality and Brand identity?

(vii): Is there a positive relationship between Brand performance and Brand identity?

(viii): Is there a positive relationship between Brand relationship and Brand identity?

1.5.2 RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

The following hypotheses, as portrayed in Figure 1.1, have been formulated to represent all the relationships included in the hypothesised model that will be tested in this study:

\( H^1 \): There is a positive relationship between Brand identity and Brand image.

\( H^2 \): There is a positive relationship between Brand reputation and Brand identity.

\( H^3 \): There is a positive relationship between Brand relevance and Brand identity.

\( H^4 \): There is a positive relationship between Brand personality and Brand identity.

\( H^5 \): There is a positive relationship between Brand performance and Brand identity.

\( H^6 \): There is a positive relationship between Brand relationship and Brand identity.

1.6 SCOPE OF THE STUDY
The focal point of this study will be on a South African University, the NMMU, which utilises the social networking site (SNS), Facebook to market their institution to its students and the public. The use of this SNS to market the university has an impact on the Brand image of the university.

The empirical research of this study will be targeted at two groups of students, namely the control group (registered and non-registered Facebook users) and the experimental group (students who ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook).

1.7 CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY

Social networking sites have been regarded as one of the main Internet success stories in recent years, due to the introduction of Web 2.0. The SNS, Facebook, has received the bulk of the attention as it continues to become a growing success (Hart, Ridley, Taher, Sas & Dix n.d.).

The principles of social media as a way of interacting online have been part of our everyday lives long ago. A large number of people log in to Facebook in an attempt to start re-establishing old connections. This action result in social media beginning to take on and epitomise the social structures and patterns that people have always maintained in their ‘real’ social lives (Kent 2009).

This study aims to expand the theoretical and empirical body of branding and social media literature by particularly focusing on the branding and social media influences. The researcher focused on the development of an entirely new form of research methodology to investigate the impact that social media have on the Brand image of a HEI.

This study endeavours to contribute to the body of knowledge on social media usage in HEIs to effectively market and brand their institutions in South Africa by identifying the most significant branding elements that influence the perceived Brand image of a HEI.
1.8 DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS

The focus on this research is to determine the impact that selected branding elements have on the Brand image of a HEI, through the use of social media (Facebook), understandable definitions of these terms are presented.

1.8.1 THE INTERNET AND WEB

The Internet and the Web is commonly thought of as being two synonyms that has the same meaning, but they however have different meanings. The Internet, for the purpose of this study, can be defined as a technical approach while the Web can be defined as being built around the http language. This http language is what one generally finds in the Internet browser (Wikström & Wigmo 2010:3).

1.8.2 SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media can be defined as media which is ‘designed to be distributed through social interaction and has been developed using highly accessible and scalable publishing techniques’ (Tinker, Mclaughlin & Dumlao 2010:113). Furthermore, social media is described as a collection of Internet-based applications, which builds on the technological and ideological foundations of Web 2.0. These applications allows for the creation and exchange of user-generated content (Botha, Farshid & Pitt 2011:44).

1.8.3 SOCIAL NETWORKING SITE (SNS)

A social networking site (SNS) can be defined as an online community, which enables users of the site to connect to, interact with and exchange information with those who share similar activities or interests, such as Facebook or MySpace (Tinker et al. 2010:113).
1.8.4  FACEBOOK

Facebook can be seen as a social utility that connects people with friends and other individuals who work, study or live around them. People use Facebook to keep in touch with friends, share videos and links, upload an unlimited number of photos and to acquire more knowledge about the people they meet (De Gouveia 2008:50).

1.8.5  BRAND IDENTITY

Brand identity is the unique set of brand associations that the brand strategist aims to create or sustain. The associations that the strategist aims to create or sustain symbolises what the brand stands for and imply a promise to customers from the organisation’s members (Coop 2004:55).

1.8.6  BRAND IMAGE

Brand image, for the purpose of this study, can be defined as the expression of an organisation’s identity and its corporate brand. It is how the organisation is seen from the perspective of one constituency. An organisation can have numerous images, depending on which constituency is involved. Constituencies can be customers, consumers, investors or employees (Argenti & Druckenmiller 2004:369).

1.8.7  BRAND REPUTATION

For the purpose of this study, Brand reputation refers to stakeholders having trust in the NMMU brand, the reliability of the brand, the honesty with which the brand is communicated to stakeholders as well as the heritage, legacy and traditions of the NMMU brand. Furthermore, brand reputation refers to a clear communication message, the consistency with which the Brand identity is communicated and then ensuring the credibility in advertising the NMMU brand.
1.8.8 BRAND RELEVANCE

For the purpose of this study, Brand relevance refers to the needs-values fit of the brand, the meaning fit of the brand, the inventiveness and uniqueness of the NMMU brand, the academic value is in harmony with the stakeholders’ needs and the brand is well-liked by the stakeholders.

1.8.9 BRAND PERSONALITY

For the purpose of this study, Brand personality refers to the sincerity of the brand, the level of excitement that the brand creates, the competency reflected by the brand, the sophistication and supremacy of the brand as well as the ruggedness and resilience of the NMMU brand.

1.8.10 BRAND PERFORMANCE

For the purpose of this study, Brand performance has been identified as exceeding the stakeholders’ expectations, delivering on its promise, delivering tangible benefits and delivering value for money.

1.8.11 BRAND RELATIONSHIP

For the purpose of this study, Brand relationship refers to the institution’s understanding of how its stakeholders feel, awareness that the stakeholders will utilise the brand for a long time and the active consideration of what its stakeholders deem to be important. Furthermore, the stakeholders who utilise the brand should find it pleasurable and the institution must be aware of the probability of non-usage of the brand.

1.8.12 HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION (HEI)
For the purpose of this study, a HEI can be seen as an establishment that offer Higher Education and that is recognised by the experienced national authority of a participating country as belonging to its system of Higher Education (Web definitions 2011).

1.9 STRUCTURE OF THE RESEARCH

The structure of the research will be as follows:

**Chapter 1**, introduced the research by presenting a background of the subject under exploration. The introduction will then be followed by the problem statement, the purpose of the study as well as an explanation of the research objectives. Furthermore, the chapter will introduce the hypothesised model proposed by the researcher that will provide the basis for the development of numerous research questions and hypotheses. The primary and secondary studies of the research will also be introduced in this chapter, as well as information with regards to the research paradigm, scale development, sampling, data collection and data analysis. Chapter 1 will also highlight the scope and contribution of the study.

**Chapter 2**, will present a discussion on the structure and evolution of the Internet as well as the nature and importance of social media. Social media and social networking sites will be defined and the most important concepts of these elements will be highlighted as well as the growth and popularity of social media and the impact thereof will be discussed. Further aspects that will be discussed in this chapter is the categorisation of the types of social media; the steps in using social media; the classification of social media users; the uses and functions of social media; the advantages and disadvantage thereof; recommendations for the successful use of social media and the use of social networks (Facebook) by HEIs. Furthermore, the concerns for social media usage by HEI; the legal and ethical considerations for the use of social media by HEI; the features and dimensions of Facebook as a social media tool and the use of Facebook by HEI and its students will also be discussed.
Chapter 3, will place emphasis on elements of branding that has an impact on the Brand image of a HEI. Subsequently, literature will be considered on the Internet, social media and branding; the comparison between product brands and corporate brands as well as the concept of brand equity and how to define, enhance and manage brand equity. Furthermore, brand knowledge, brand awareness, Brand image and Brand identity will be discussed in order to identify the most relevant conditions and requirements essential for an exceptional Brand image. A comparison between the Brand image and Brand identity of the NMMU will be given as well as a description on the variables that influences the Brand image of a HEI.

Chapter 4, the branding and social networking factors examined in Chapter 3 will form the foundation for the hypothesised model presented in this chapter. The primary purpose of the hypothesised model will be to recommend ways to improve the likelihood of having an outstanding Brand image for a HEI. Further information relating to the impact that the branding elements (Brand reputation, Brand relevance, Brand personality, Brand performance and Brand relationship) have on the intermediate variable, Brand identity will be provided.

Chapter 5, will focus on providing an explanation and a motivation for the research methodology to be implemented in this study by elaborating on the research design, research methodology (sampling frame, sampling unit, sampling, sample size, sample procedure and the design of the measuring instrument) as well as the data collection methods. The techniques used for data and statistical analyses will also be explained.

Chapter 6, will place prominence on the reliability and validity of the measuring instruments used throughout the study. This will be done by discussing the demographic information obtained from the study, the results of the quasi-experimental design analysis; the empirical results of the Multiple linear regression analysis as well as a discussion on the results obtained from Facebook Insights.

Chapter 7, will be the final chapter of the study and will therefore propose the summary, conclusions and recommendations of the research. The contributions and
potential limitations of the study will be discussed as well as possible recommendations for future research will be given.

CHAPTER 2

CONTEXTUALISING SOCIAL MEDIA AND ITS USE BY HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS (HEIs)

2.1 INTRODUCTION

As was discussed in the previous chapter, the main purpose of this research is to determine if the perceived Brand image of a Higher Education Institution (HEI), in the case of this study the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU), is influenced by the use of social media.

Constantinides and Fountain (2008:232) states that the terms social media and Web 2.0 is frequently used interchangeably. It has however been noted that some observers associate Web 2.0 primarily with online applications, while they associate social media with the social aspects of Web 2.0 applications, including participation, openness, conversation, community and connectedness. Social media can therefore be defined as media which is ‘designed to be distributed through social interaction and has been developed using highly accessible and scalable publishing techniques’ (Tinker et al. 2010:113). Furthermore, social media is described as a collection of Internet-based applications, which builds on the technological and ideological foundations of Web 2.0. These applications allows for the creation and exchange of user-generated content (Botha et al. 2011:44). A social networking site can be defined as an online community, which enables users of the site to connect to, interact with and exchange information with those who share similar activities or interests, such as Facebook or MySpace (Tinker et al. 2010:113). Social networking is regarded as one aspect of social media, in which individuals are in communities where they share interests, ideas or are looking to meet people with similar ideas and interests to what they have. Currently (2011), the two most popular online social networking communities are Facebook and MySpace (Reuben 2008:2).
This chapter will firstly highlight the structure and evolution of the Internet as well as the nature and importance of social media. Emphasis will be placed on defining social media and social networking sites, the growth and popularity thereof, the impact they have, the types of social networking sites, the steps in using social media, the classification of social network users, the uses and functions of social media, as well as the advantages and disadvantages of social media. Thereafter certain recommendations for the successful use of social media will be put forward. This chapter further investigates the use of social media by Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and provide information on the use of social media as a marketing and communication tool as well as the concerns that HEIs face when utilising social media. Certain ethical and legal considerations needs to be adhere to when using social media marketing and these are discussed within this chapter. The chapter will be concluded by introducing the social networking site (SNS) that will be used to accomplish the primary objective of the study, namely Facebook. The various features and dimensions of Facebook as well as the use of Facebook by HEIs and its students will be discussed.

2.2 STRUCTURE AND EVOLUTION OF THE INTERNET

When one considers the Internet as a single invention, it can possibly be seen as one of the greatest inventions of all time. The Internet started as the ARPANET during the Cold War of 1969, which was established by the US Department of Defence (DOD) in conjunction with universities and a number of military contractors in order to investigate the possibility of building a communication network that will be able to withstand a nuclear attack. The Internet has continued due to universities and contractors realising that it provided a convenient way to communicate and the Internet has since developed into a resourcful, global communication tool (Klemz 2008:1). The evolvement of the Internet has made it possible to do shopping, listen to and read the latest news, pay bills, socialise with friends and even stream movies and television shows (Wikström & Wigmo 2010:1), all with the benefit of not having to leave the comfort of one’s house.
In the earlier years, both start-up and well-established businesses created a Web presence with the aim to attract more sales and market share, even though very few were successful. Between 2000 and 2002 over 500 Internet firms shut down in the United States alone (Strauss & Frost 2009:9-16). Regardless of these early failures, traditional brick-and-mortar retailers recognised that Internet technologies had fundamentally changed the structure of their industry as well as several other industries. Within the on-line environment, marketers want to identify which specific technologies will result in top line sales and bottom line profitability (Strauss & Frost 2009:9-16).

The Internet has been identified and comprising of properties that create opportunities beyond those possible with the telephone, television, postal mail, or other communication media. These Internet properties do not only allow for more efficient and effective marketing strategies and tactical implementation. In addition, they actually change the way in which marketing is conducted (Strauss & Frost 2009:9-16).

The primary focus of the first phase of the Web from 1990 to 1995 was HTML and the building of a site (Webber 2009:14). During that first phase early work was done for American Online (AOL) where early communities were established and marketed, which were called chat rooms. The most popular chat rooms were those established for the Boston Red Sox fans, personal finance and breast cancer survivors. In this first phase Monster.com also built its online community and during the middle of the 1990’s General Motors’ E-GM was launched, which was one of the first online automotive communities. Throughout this time a large number of technologies and software companies got established, which all led to the Internet evolving (Webber 2009:15).

The unique properties and strengths of Internet technologies provided a channel to move from the first to the second generation and allows marketers to create brand new products that capitalise on Web 2.0 technologies (Strauss & Frost 2009:9-16). With the introduction of the browser, the second phase of the Internet entailed more transactional activities such as pop-ups, click-troughs and searches as well as interactivity. This second phase lasted for a period of about ten years, which then
made space for the third phase of the Internet (Webber 2009:15), which is currently (2011) where we find ourselves. This third phase is known as the social Web or Web 2.0 (Webber 2009:15).

Web 2.0 may be regarded as a collection of open-source, user-controlled and interactive online applications aimed at expanding the experiences, knowledge and market power of the users as participants in the business and social processes. According to Constantinides and Fountain (2008:232), Web 2.0 applications support the development of informal users’ networks, which facilitates the flow of ideas and knowledge by allowing for the efficient generation, distribution, sharing and editing as well as the refining of the information content (Constantinides & Fountain 2008:232-233; Constantinides, Romero & Gómez Boria 2008:7).

Webber (2009:16) is of the opinion that the social Web can be regarded as being the most critical marketing communications tool, similar to the role that newspapers played in the 1800’s. During the first half of the twentieth century, magazines and radio played a critical role, while the television took over that role by the second half of the twentieth century. During the 1990’s the Internet became very significant and played a critical role in marketing (Webber 2009:16).

The most important role of marketers utilising the social Web is that they need to accumulate their customers. There are two ways through which customers can be acquired. The first method is to provide users with persuasive content on the Website as well as to create an environment that users would want to visit and secondly the business must go out and participate in the public arena (Webber 2009:16).

The social Web will in time become the primary centre of activity for everything that individuals do, whether it is planning, shopping, learning or communicating. It will become the first place that individuals will visit when looking for information, news, entertainment or diversion (Webber 2009:17) and the world’s population is presently moving into that era at a steadily pace.
With the introduction of Web 2.0 the static nature of the Internet in its early stages has changed to become more flexible and the content increasingly user-generated. The Internet has now become a social medium due to the fact that people can interact with one another on the Internet. Web 2.0 technologies can be seen as a group of ‘social’ technologies that includes wikis, blogs and social networking sites. These ‘social’ technologies provide users more control over information. Web 2.0 technologies’ focus is on user-generated content and make the Web a more collaborative, interactive and dynamic environment, which allows the users the ability to determine the organisation of information (Harvey 2010:5). Social networking sites accentuate the social nature of such technologies and are occasionally incorporated with other Web 2.0 technologies to provide a richer interactive environment. The advent of Web 2.0 technologies allow users to connect with one another and communicate effortlessly with groups of people who are sometimes geographically dispersed (Harvey 2010:5). Social software or Web 2.0 is regarded as a tool, which facilitates community-building and support online cooperation (Fuchs 2009:5).

Web 3.0, also sometimes referred to as the Semantic Web, can be regarded as an extension of the current Web in which information is given well-defined meaning. The Semantic Web has been highlighted as making it easier to access information by providing a standard definition protocol so that users can easily find information based on its type, such as a person and contact information, upcoming social events as well as local restaurant menus (Strauss & Frost 2009:916).

Fuchs (2009:6) states while Web 1.0 is a computer-based network system of human cognition, Web 2.0 can rather be seen as a computer-based networked system of human communication, while Web 3.0 is a computer-based networked system of human operation. According to Fuchs (2009:7), the three types of the Web are connected in an overall model. In Web 1.0, individuals become aware of information and Web 1.0 with the help of the data they obtain from a technologically networked information-space. Considering Web 2.0 as a system of communication, it is based on web-mediated cognition, where people interact with one another through the help of symbols that are stored, transmitted, and received by utilising computers or computer networks. Web-mediated cognition has been highlighted as enabling web-
mediated communication and vice versa. The communication process cannot take place without cognition. A new quality has emerged in Web 3.0, which is produced by communicative actions and certain cohesion is necessary amongst the users. Similarly, web-mediated communication enables web-mediate cooperation and vice versa. The cooperation process cannot take place without communication and cognition (Fuchs 2009:8).

Some people believe that Web 4.0 will soon make its appearance on the Internet and will feature rich media such as sound, video and even touch as well as broadband, which will make use of high definition. All of these features will contribute to making the Web more emotive. The emotive nature of Web 4.0 will entail both business and personal sensations. This is because the experience does not only offer users with emotions like curiosity, disgust, joy and happiness, but also with the sensation of fulfilment and satisfaction on the business side of the interaction (Webber 2009:15).

For the purpose of this study, the focus will be on Web 2.0 and Web 3.0 as these two stages of the Web encompasses the interactivity elements of the Web as well as the establishment of the ability to interact with one another.

2.3 THE NATURE AND IMPORTANCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

In order to understand the concepts of social media and social networking sites as part of social media, it is important to define social media and a SNS as well as the impact that social networking sites have on individuals and their use of the Internet. Furthermore, this section indicate the growth and popularity of social networking sites, the types of social networking sites currently available, the steps in using social media as well as classifying social media users. Lastly, this section provides recommendations for the successful use of social media as well as the advantages and disadvantages thereof. Each one of these aspects will be elaborated on in the sections to follow.

2.3.1 DEFINING SOCIAL MEDIA AND SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES (SNS)
Stokes (2008:124) indicates that the various facets of social media are also called Web 2.0, which is known as consumer generated media, citizen media as well as new media. Therefore, social media can be defined as media, which can be written, visual or audio visual that is designed specifically for the purpose to be shared. The aspect of sharing indicates that it is easier to comment on the content, the content is easy to send and there are no high costs associated with the process of viewing the media. The connected nature of the Internet means that the sharing, commenting on and viewing of content can be tracked and measured. The realm of social media is all about user generated content, collaboration amongst individuals, the sharing of content and most importantly about connecting (Stokes 2008:124).

A useful way to defining exactly what social media is, Stokes (2008:124) provides a comparison between traditional and social media, by highlighting the main differences amongst the two types of media as illustrated in Table 2.1.

**Table 2.1: Comparison between traditional media and social media**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Traditional media</th>
<th>Social media</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Media is fixed and unchangeable</td>
<td>Media is instantly updateable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commentary is not in real-time and limited</td>
<td>Social media provides unlimited real-time commentary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time-delayed and limited bestseller lists</td>
<td>Instant popularity estimation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor access to archives</td>
<td>Archives easily accessible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited media mix</td>
<td>All the media can be mixed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make use of committee publishers</td>
<td>Makes use of individual publishers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finite</td>
<td>Infinite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The sharing of content not encouraged</td>
<td>Participation and sharing are encouraged</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>Freedom</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Huberman, Romero and Wu (2008:2) define a social network as a network, which embodies the belief that it includes all the people with whom one shares a social relationship. However, in actual fact individuals network with only a small number of
those people who form part of their social network. As attention is a scarce resource in the age of the Web. People have always engaged in social networks, as they can be formed around friendships, religious beliefs, family, social status and more. The information people share with their social network by using social networking sites is referred to as social media. Examples of these social networking sites include blogs, forums, photos, audio, profiles and status updates (Wikström & Wigmo 2010:1). The members of social networking sites has to complete numerous daily tasks and a large number of social links default to interact with the small number of people that matter and that reciprocate their attention (Huberman et al. 2008:2). Stokes (2008:125) defines a social network as a type of web site model where the individual members of the network become part of a greater virtual community.

Furthermore, Boyd and Ellison (2008:210) define social network sites as web-based services that enable individuals to perform three tasks. Firstly, it allows users to construct a public or a semi-public online profile within a bounded system. Secondly, social network sites allow users to articulate a list of other individuals or users they share a connection with. Lastly, social network sites allow users to view and navigate their list of connections as well as those made by others within the system. Although this definition from Boyd and Ellison (2008:210) makes reference to ‘social network sites’, the term ‘social networking site’ is also often used when referring to this concept, and these two terms can be used interchangeably in this study.

For the purpose of this study, a SNS can be defined as an online community, which enables users of the site to connect to, interact with and exchange information with those who share similar activities or interests, such as Facebook or MySpace (Tinker et al. 2010:113).

2.3.2 GROWTH AND POPULARITY OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Since the beginning of the 21st century the number of members on social networking sites (as an element of social media) has grown immensely as interfaces now enables people to follow the lives of their acquaintances, friends and family (Huberman et al. 2008:2). Social networking sites enable people with no special knowledge to instantly post and share information with the world. (Wikström &
Wigmo 2010:1). Social networking sites like Facebook, YouTube and Twitter millions of members who keep track of one another’s lives and professionals engage in commercial transactions when needed (Huberman et al. 2008:2).

Together with the growth and increase in popularity of social media and social networking sites it has been accompanied with a large coverage in the press, which includes the speculations about the possible gains and problems arising from the usage of social networking sites (Hargittai 2007). People do not only use these sites to keep in touch with their family and friends, but it can also be seen as a powerful marketing place. Customers use these sites to set rules and share their views that can make or break the product or brand. Marketing is regarded as a two way communication when using social media, as opposed to the one way communication used in traditional marketing (Wikström & Wigmo 2010:1). Profitable enterprises take advantage of social media for marketing purposes as it provide them with a convenient medium for circulating recommendations through people with similar interests (Huberman et al. 2008:2).

Over the last few years, online social networking sites as an element of social media moved from being a niche phenomenon to being adopted by a mass number of users. Even though this concept can be dated back as early as the 1960s, with the University of Illinois’ Plato computer-based education tool, real commercial interest and large online growth only emerged after the advent of the Internet in the 1990s. The rapid growing participation in social networking over last the few years has been accompanied by a progressive sophistication and diversification of the purposes and usage patterns across a large number of different sites (Gross & Acquisti 2005).

Blogs, forums and popular social networking sites such as Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn can be regarded as only being the tip of the social media iceberg. The Internet has now become an ‘anywhere, anytime’ environment where companies’ sensitive information is no longer just confined to the company’s corporate perimeter due to the ever-present nature of smartphones and other mobile devices. (Popular mechanics 2011:61).
It has been noted by Kumar, Novak and Tomkins (2006) that the power of individuals networking with other individuals in an online setting has determined the success and failure of numerous companies in the Internet space. MySpace (www.myspace.com) and Flickr (flickr.com) are amongst some of the social media applications that have exploded in popularity that led to the realignment of the online landscape. Several newly established companies have made social media the focus of their companies, offering every user the promise to administer their own social network as a valuable resource to be steered and grown (Kumar et al. 2006).

Social media and social networking sites are fairly new technologies that offer users with an assortment of communication tools that is quick and easy to use. By creating a profile, users are capable of finding and connecting to others and unite in groups around shared interests and share information. (Harvey 2010:6).

The soaring usage levels seen on public social networking sites such as MySpace and Facebook, as well as users’ ongoing commitment to check the sites, advocates that these sites have the crucial ‘sticking factor’, where users spend time by both reading and contributing to the content of the site. (Harvey 2010:6). Due to these sites’ high levels of usage in the public domain, it made these sites a fascinating technology to investigate and it demonstrated potential for application to other areas. Social media and social networking sites offer the benefits of increased popularity and communication to large numbers of people that lead to these sites being attractive to marketers of a project that is seeking to engage their stakeholders as well as keep them involved (Harvey 2010:6).

The interest of social media and social networking sites from the academic community has increased as the number of social media being developed on the Internet has increased in the last few years. During the past decades, offline networks have been the subject of intense academic enquiry, but as a number of large online social networks evolved and became available it led to raising a new set of questions with regards to the impact of social networking sites as well as increased interest to research the concept (Kumar et al. 2006). Therefore, social networking sites has since been studied by academic researchers, with the research questions ranging from privacy concerns, the building and maintenance of social
capital (Ellison et al. 2007) to the role of social networking sites in identity building and expression (Hargittai 2007).

On the scholarly side, a large body of knowledge has accumulated on the development and dynamics of these networks. The availability of the data and the reliability found in the statistical distribution of the links and nodes within these networks has fuelled the accumulation of this information (Huberman et al. 2008:2).

### 2.3.3 THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA

The Internet is currently a very different place from what the Web World was even as short as five years ago, due to the introduction of social media. There are no longer Web pages that are made up of static content that changes slowly, where changes to these static pages could only be measured in weeks or even months. The advent of social media has made the Internet a prosperous ‘always on’ environment where activity is constantly taking place, with near real-time postings, the latest videos being uploaded onto YouTube every minute of the night or day as well as constant chats and tweets. (Popular mechanics 2011:61).

The development of social media empowered individual users who have fairly low technological sophistication in using the Web to engage in social interaction, manifest their creativity, share content and information. Furthermore, it assist these users in building new social media tools collectively, contribute their expertise, publish propaganda and information as well as assimilate collective bargaining power (Parameswaran & Whinston 2007:763).

The way in which people engage with the Internet has also undergone significant changes as social media created a world of constant ‘anytime, anywhere’ access. This is brought about by the popularity and abundance of smartphones like the iPhone, BlackBerry and Android (Popular mechanics 2011:61). The explosive growth of Twitter and the large adoption of blogs has facilitated in demonstrating the increasing role played by social media in the business world as well as its significance as a game-changing customer communication platform. It has been
suggested that social media can no longer be considered as a choice as it is now a business transformation tool (Popular mechanics 2011:62).

The current generation of high school graduates often referred to as the wired generation, because they have been exposed to the Internet since their early childhood. This group of 16 to 24 year old individuals are constantly connected to something, whether it is a cell phone, a music player, the Internet, instant messaging services or sometimes all of these are found within a single device (Barnes 2009:2).

Although social networking has always existed, the introduction of social media on the Web has made the Web significantly faster as well as possessing more potent marketing power. Without even realising it, humans are living by social networks. This result in these individuals following the herd as they are being influenced in their decisions, by their friends and their friends’ friends decisions. With the introduction of social media and social networking on the Internet it has made it possible for companies and institutions to observe and harness its potential marketing power. (Wikström & Wigmo 2010:45).

The primary focus of social networking sites is to connect people as well as the sharing of information with these individuals. These social networking sites is based on the principle of enabling users to create a profile where they describe themselves and connect to other users of the network, stating how they are connected. When users have a profile on these sites they are able to upload photos and videos that they share with others on the site. When a user is connected to other users on the site, they are provided with regular news feeds when logging onto the site. The news feeds keep the users informed and up to date with their friends’ activities (Harvey 2010:145).

Social networking services collect information on users’ social contacts and then construct a large interrelated social network. These interconnected social networks are used to reveal to users how they are linked to others in the network. The principle of these businesses is that the individual might only be removed from the desired social or business partner in a small way without them being aware of it. These social networking services enable its users to get to know their friends as well
as their friends’ friends, which provide them with the opportunity to expand their social circle (Adamic & Adar 2008:2).

### 2.3.4 CATEGORISATION OF THE TYPES OF SOCIAL MEDIA

As was mentioned earlier, Web 2.0 or the social Web may be illustrated and described along three main dimensions, namely application types, social effects and enabling technologies as shown in Figure 2.1.

**Figure 2.1: The three dimensions of Web 2.0**

Source: Constantinides et al. (2008:7).
It is very important to have a thorough understanding of the different types or classifications of the types of Web 2.0 dimensions available, as it facilitates in looking at the differences in usage extent as well as the marketing possibilities. There are five main categories of social media or application types (Constantinides & Fountain 2008:233; Stagno 2010:6). These five application types are different types of social media elements utilised by individuals, namely:

1. **Weblogs**: Applications that allows one to keep an online journal e.g. [http://www.blogger.com](http://www.blogger.com) (Constantinides & Fountain 2008:233; Stagno 2010:6); Wordpress.com and TypePad (On Blogging Well 2010). Blogs, which have been derived from the term weblogs, can be regarded as being the most visible social computing initiative. Blogs can be thought of as online journals and is either published by an individual or a small group by making use of the Web interface. Blogs usually focus on a variety of topics or a single topic, which reflects the interests of the author/authors. Blogs that are popular attracts the attention of groups of users, who then participates in the discussion thereof through easy interfaces (Parameswaran & Whinston 2007:764).

2. **Social networks**: Applications that enables users to build personal websites as well as to connect with one another to communicate and exchange personal content e.g. [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com) (Constantinides & Fountain 2008:233; Stagno 2010:6); MySpace and Friendster (On Blogging Well 2010). Furthermore, these networks also enable users to create contact in all fields ranging from personal to professional. These social networks refer to systems that allow the users of a particular site to learn and understand other members’ skills, talents, preferences or knowledge (Constantinides et al. 2008:7).

3. **Communities**: These applications allows for the sharing of content online e.g. [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com) (Constantinides & Fountain 2008:233; Stagno 2010:6); Niche communities such as Traffikd; Comment communities such as Disqus; Podcasting communities such as Blubrry.com; Blogging communities such as BlogHer and LiveJournal; Content-driven communities such as Wikipedia; and Product-driven communities eBay and Amazon.com (On Blogging Well 2010). The primary purpose of content communities is to share media content between its users. A number of content communities exist for a wide range of
media such as text (BookCrossing), photos (Flickr), videos (YouTube) as well as PowerPoint presentations (Slideshare). It is not required from individuals using content communities to create a personal profile on the page, but if they decide to do so, the profile usually contains only basic information (Kaplan & Haenlein 2009: 63).

4. Forums (bulletin boards): This type of application allows the exchange and discussion of ideas, opinions and information e.g. www.epinions.com (Constantinides & Fountain 2008:233; Stagno 2010:6).

5. Content aggregators: With these applications users are able to create fully adaptable web content. Content aggregator applications enable its users to fully customise the content they wish to access on the Web. These sites utilise a technique known as Real Simple Syndication or Rich Site Summary (RSS). e.g. www.google.com/ig (Constantinides & Fountain 2008:233; Stagno 2010:6). Users are considered to be important for all categories of Web 2.0 applications, not just as customers, but also as contributors of content as the term user-generated content (UGC) underline this special attribute of all the above-mentioned Web 2.0 application categories (Constantinides et al. 2008:8).

These social media or application types can also be used in combination with one another on the same site. A person can have a profile on a SNS (which is a social network application), which includes a discussion section on a particular subject (which is a forum application), where photos and videos are uploaded (which is a community application). Furthermore, this site also contains a feed of announcements from external sources being published (which is a content aggregator application) (Stagno 2010:6).

When external sources publish feeds or announcements on online social media sites, ‘Really Simple Syndication’ or ‘Rich Site Summary’ (RSS) technology (enabling technologies indicated in Figure 2.2) are being used that allows for the automatic streaming of data (e.g. news updates or blog entries) from selected source with syndicated content. Selected information can be distributed to a large number of recipients instantly or to numerous places where organisations have an online
presence, therefore resulting in RSS technology offering immense potential for marketing purposes (Stagno 2010:6).

Cavazza (2011) introduced a broader categorisation of social media by breaking the various types of social media into ten categories. This break down of the various types of social media also provides an indication as to how diverse and rich social media is. Each one of the ten categories proposed by Cavazza (2011) includes the different types of social media sites that falls within that category, namely (Figure 2.2):

1. Publication tools, such as Wikipedia, Wikia and Wordpress.
2. Sharing tools, such as YouTube, Slideshare, Flickr, Crowdstorm and Feedback.
3. Discussion tools, such as Skype, Yahoo chat, Phorum and Google talk.
4. Social networks, such as Facebook, MySpace, LinkedIn, Bebo, Orkut, Ning and Hi5.
5. Micropublication tools (Microblogs), such as Twitter, Tweetpeek, Pownce, Plurk and Twitxr.
6. Social aggregation tools (Lifestream), such as Socializr, Socialthing and Friendfeed.
7. Livecast, such as Yahoo Live, Livecastr, BlogTV and UstreamTV.
8. Virtual worlds, such as Habbo, IMVU and Barbie Girl.
9. Social gaming, such as Three Rings, Doof, Pogo, Kongregate and Cafe.com, and
10. Massively Multiplayer Online gaming (MMO), such as Neopets, Kartrider and World of Warcraft (Cavazza 2011; Reuben 2008:1-2).
Figure 2.2: Ten categories of social media

Source: Adapted from Cavazza (2011).

Social media can be regarded as the places, tools and services that allow individuals with an environment to express themselves, to meet their needs and to share information with one another. Social media tools can take on a variety of forms as well as fulfil various needs (Cavazza 2011).

2.3.5 STEPS IN USING SOCIAL MEDIA
The conversation prism, developed by Solis (2008) is a modification of the Social Media Starfish, which was established in 2007 to indicate the platforms that Internet users use to converse with one another in the online environment. Solis (2008) introduced ‘The Conversation Prism’, which is a new graphic that was developed in order to facilitate the charting of online conversations amongst the individuals that populate communities and the networks that connect the social Web.

Solis (2008) describes ‘The Conversation Prism’ as the art of listening, learning and sharing information online. This prism provides an indication as to the wide range of social media tools that are available today. The Conversation Prism assists in visualising the potential extent and frequency of the online conversations that can impact and influence a business, its brand (Solis 2008) and therefore (HEIs) as well.

This conversation prism proposed by Solis (2008) is a living, breathing illustration of social media, which will progress as services and conversation channels materialise, fuse and dissolve. A relevant question that requires answering when using social media is: ‘If a conversation takes place online and one is not aware of it and does not actually hear or see it, did it actually take place?’ The answer to that question is ‘yes’, as conversations are taking place with or without one being present on the Web.

As a communications or service professional a person will find themselves in the heart of the prism, regardless of whether one is listening, observing or participating in the activities of their customers. This prism will facilitate a person to have a better understanding on how to listen to what is being said and then how to participate transparently, truthfully and effectively (Solis 2008).

Elley and Tilley (2009:85) cited in Wikström and Wigmo (2010:7) added to the conversation prism from Solis (2008) by indicating that when using social media for the first time it is important to follow four steps, namely to listen, to join, to participate and to create (Wikström & Wigmo 2010:7), which links in with the three elements listening, learning and information sharing of the conversation prism.
When strategic marketers use social media it is very important that they use these four steps as suggested in Wikström and Wigmo (2010:7) in the correct order, in order to achieve the desired outcome and obtain a sustainable competitive advantage.

2.3.5.1 Listening

The most essential step when using social media is the task of listening to what is said on the Internet. It is true that individuals are frequently mentioning a business and commenting about it and the task required by the individuals owning the business is to listen, in order to respond in the correct way. Although one does not actively participate in the discussion, listening to what is being said can prove to be valuable. Engaging in the process of listening to what is being said is regarded as being the best and cheapest form of information as it can be obtained free of charge. Therefore it is beneficial to make use of this process instead of conducting expensive surveys, focus groups and other experiments. This will enable one to find out what customers think, what they want, what their problems and frustrations are, as well as what the target market or demographic section consider as being important (Elley & Tilley (2009:86) cited in Wikström & Wigmo 2010:7).

2.3.5.2 Joining

A company, business or institution needs to join a social network once they have an adequate understanding of their target community and what they are about. Most of the social networks found online require one to have an account or profile before being able to participate in the discussion. Although it might not be required by a network to have an account it is always beneficial to have one as it facilitates one to claim your brand and company name and to gain credibility. Lastly, one needs to join communities where your customers will most likely be (Elley & Tilley (2009:87) cited in Wikström & Wigmo 2010:7).

2.3.5.3 Participating
Once companies, businesses or institutions have engaged in listening and joining they need to participate within their identified communities. This participation includes posting on and replying to online forums and blogs, bookmarking liked sites as well as reviewing products and services. It is beneficial to participate online as it assists in building one’s online brand and it will lead to people respecting you as a valuable addition to the community (Elley & Tilley (2009:88) cited in Wikström & Wigmo 2010:7).

2.3.5.4 Creating

After a business has built itself as an online brand by listening, joining and participating, the last step in using social media is to create one’s own content. When creating content by using social media online one will have an audience to share it with and that will assist in sharing this content (Wikström & Wigmo 2010:7). The main aspect is to create values. In order to have people notice and be interested to find out more about the company, business or institution one needs to make a beneficial contribution to the online community. If the company, business or institution performed the listening task effectively, they will have a solid idea as to the type of content that their targets will like to see (Elley & Tilley (2009:89) cited in Wikström & Wigmo 2010:7).

2.3.6 CLASSIFICATION OF SOCIAL NETWORK USERS

When individuals join social networking sites they join in one of two distinct ways. They may either register on an online social network by actively seeking out the network or they can be invited by a colleague or friend (Kumar et al. 2006).

Kumar et al. (2006) classify the members who join a SNS as belonging to one of three groups, namely the singletons, the giant component and the middle region. The singletons are those members who joined the social network, but who has never made a connection with any other user or member in the social network. Singletons are seen as loners who do not actively participate in the social network. The giant component is those individuals and members of social networks who are connected to others through paths in the social network and who represents a large group. The
giant component contains most of the highly active and sociable individuals. These individuals find themselves connected, either directly or indirectly to a large fraction of the entire network. The middle region is the small groups and isolated communities who connects and interacts with one another but not the network at large. The middle region represents a considerable portion of the entire population of a social network (Kumar et al. 2006).

The users of online social networking sites can also be categorised into passive users, linkers and inviters. Passive users are those individuals who join a SNS at the insistence of their friends or out of curiosity, but they never engage in any noteworthy activity on the site. The linkers are those individuals who fully participate in the growth of the site and who actively connects or links themselves to other members of the site. Lastly, the inviters are those individuals who are interested in transferring an offline community to an online SNS. Inviters also actively recruit their friends to participate in the online SNS (Kumar et al. 2006).

Stagno (2010:6) expands on the classification of users by highlighting the fact that the users of social networking sites can be classified according to the type of activities they perform on the sites. These different user groups can be useful in segmenting the market and the formulation of different strategies for communications with and marketing to the users. Therefore the users of social networks can be grouped into three classes. These groupings are based on their intensity of use, namely no use, passive use and active use (Stagno 2010:6).

The Social Technographics Ladder proposed by Li and Bernoff (2008) offers a more redefined classification of the groups of social media users (Stagno 2010:6). When combining these two classifications proposed by Kumar et al. (2006), namely the three groups (the singletons, the giant component and the middle region) and the passive users, linkers and inviters, the results are the following categories, illustrated in Figure 2.3. Figure 2.3 illustrates three broad groups namely active, use, passive use and no use, which indicates the six social media user classifications, namely the creators, critics, collectors, joiners, spectators and inactives as well as the identifying characteristics and activities in which each one of these users engage.
Active use:
1) Creators: These individuals are those who actively write, publish and upload content. These users form the top part of the Social Technographics Ladder and are online customers who engage with social networking sites at least once a month to perform the abovementioned tasks.
2) Critics: These individuals or users are those who engage in rating, contributing to and commenting on content found on the sites (Li 2007:4; Stagno 2010:6). Critics differ from creators, as they can select and choose sites where they want to offer their expertise (Li 2007:4).

Passive use:
3) Collectors: These individuals are those who tag, vote on and subscribe to content (Li & Bernoff 2008; Stagno 2010:6). Users of social networking sites often use ‘Really Simple Syndication’ or ‘Rich Site Summary’ (RSS) feeds on Bloglines or save Uniform Resource Locator (URLs) on a social bookmarking service such as Del.icio.us and through these actions create a metadata that is shared with the entire online community. This can be regarded as an act of collecting and aggregating information, which plays a vital role in organising the vast amount of content that is produced by creators and critics (Li 2007:4).
4) Joiners: This group of users can be regarded as possessing only one defining behaviour, namely the use of social networking sites, such as MySpace and Facebook (Li 2007:5). These individuals all maintain a social network profile and connect to others who have profiles on these sites (Li & Bernoff 2008; Stagno 2010:6).
5) Spectators: These individuals engage in the process of reading, watching and listening to content (Li & Bernoff 2008; Stagno 2010:6). These processes involve the reading of blogs, listening to podcasts and view videos on YouTube (Li 2007:5).

No use:
6) Inactives: This is individuals who do not engage in any of the abovementioned activities (Li & Bernoff 2008; Stagno 2010:6).
When considering the Social Technographics Ladder it is useful to note that a user who operates at the higher levels of the ladder does not necessarily perform activities at a lower level, although they are likely to do so (Stagno 2010:6).

**Figure 2.3: The Social Technographics Ladder**

Source: Adapted from Li (2007:5).

2.3.7 USES AND FUNCTIONS OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Social networking sites serve numerous functions in the offline lives of people such as providing social and emotional support, ties to other people as well as being a source of information. In online communities, similar kinds of social networks have
been found where these users go online and use it to obtain information and acquire emotional support. In both of these situations where users access social networks, it provides the user with social capital (Joinson 2008).

Another function that social networking sites offer is uses and gratification, which refers to the how and why of social media use. Uses and gratification refers to the motivations of specific uses as well as the satisfaction that people gain from these uses. There are two forms of gratification, one based on the actual experience of using the media (process gratification) and one based on the content of the media (content gratification) (Joinson 2008). Content gratifications have been identified as being related to the frequent use of a particular media, which in turn for designers of such systems relate to a site’s stickiness. Compared to old traditional media such as the television, the Internet in general and social networking sites in particular now offers interaction and communication. Due to these offerings it led to the proposing of a third form of gratification that arose from Internet use, namely a social environment (Joinson 2008).

Blogs, as an example of a SNS, can be utilised for numerous purposes apart from only making a personal blog entry. These blogs can also be considered as being highly adaptable. A trend by the admission departments of HEIs is to solicit their current students to join the blog and post on their lives and experiences at the institution in an attempt to attract future students to their institution (Reuben 2008:7). Furthermore, different departments and faculties within the institution use blogs to inform people about the courses that they offer as well as their research projects with the anticipation of attracting current and prospective students to their area of research or course (Reuben 2008:7).

Social networking sites enable businesses to interact and engage with their potential and current customers on an individual level. The nature of social networking sites indicates that when an individual interact with the business’s brand on the site, their activity is broadcasted to their networks, which leads to greater exposure for the business (Parker 2011:93).

\section*{2.3.8 ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF SOCIAL MEDIA}
Social media can be regarded as an extraordinary phenomenon, identified as opening up new worlds of opportunities for every organisation. It has been noted that although the rewards and potentials from social media is seemingly limitless, so is the challenges and risks associated with the usage of social media (Popular mechanics 2010:61). The different advantages of social media are summarised in the sections below.

2.3.8.1 Advantages

One of the primary advantages of using social media is the increased brand awareness that businesses can gain from utilising social media. When marketers interact with other individuals within the social media channels that they utilise it results in building awareness for the brand as well as increasing the brand’s visibility. Another advantage of social networking sites is that it draws traffic to the business’s website that leads to increased website traffic. When a business actively engages with numerous social media networks and services their opportunity to answer questions and respond to feedback increases. When businesses utilise this medium in the right way their reputation will improve, resulting in increased as well as improved reputation (Dosh Dosh 2008 cited in Wikström & Wigmo 2010:15).

Another advantage of social media usage is that of personal development. A major part of networking is to observe, by following the right people the business’s knowledge will improve and increase. By having this increased knowledge it provides them with insight into how the market and trends looks from a customer’s point of view (Dosh Dosh 2008 cited in Wikström & Wigmo 2010:15).

Furthermore, social media usage generates the advantage of creating relationships with benefits. This goal or benefit can be seen as having some similarities with an improved reputation. This is due to the fact that social media builds beneficial relationships, such as links and recommendations. Although social media has such benefits it is important to note that they should offer something back in return, like interacting with the customers (Dosh Dosh 2008 cited in Wikström & Wigmo 2010:15).
Other advantages of social media usage include providing businesses with the ability to identify and help dissatisfied customers at an early stage. It is important for businesses to continuously monitor the social media that they utilise in order to quickly find and interact with dissatisfied customers to prevent the negative effects of bad rumours. Speedy and good responses can result in negative opinions being converted into positive ones, because customers feel as though the business really care. Social media is generally free to use when used to promote a brand, creating the advantage of social media being free media. (Wikström & Wigmo 2010:36).

A key feature and major advantage of social media and social networking sites is that it can aid in these sites gaining popularity as almost anyone can get started with limited computer experience due to its ease of use (Harvey 2010:135).

Social networking sites provide new ways of information sharing that enables users to exchange information on the Internet. Information sharing can now be seen as being easy and convenient as users can publish information without necessarily linking it to the wider Web. Furthermore, the use of social media enables marketers and businesses to locate and access information. With the development of social networking sites, users are now able to locate and access information, which was previously only available and exchanged by word-of-mouth. Social networking sites differ from the Web, which organises information according to popular opinion, whereas social networks have the ability to organise information to appeal to a smaller group of individuals according to their taste and preferences. (Mislove, Gummadi & Druschel 2006:83).

The use of social media also provides an environment where the youth can engage with one another. A number of opportunities and advantages exist within the youth market, due to social networking sites creating an environment where the youth can share cultural artefacts, such as posting links to comments on television series, movies or humorous websites; ‘hang out’ with their peers and friends as well as creating an image of how they see themselves. The SNS, MySpace offers young people ample opportunities when engaging with the site including the ability to blog,
diarise, flirt, post pictures and creative artwork, share videos and last but not least the ability to meet new people (Parameswaran & Whinston 2007:768).

It is evident from the above-mentioned paragraphs that the use of social media presents companies, organisations or institutions with numerous advantages. When social media tools are used optimally, greater awareness of the brand is achieved, as well as a better reputation amongst customers. Furthermore, the use of social media provides the opportunity to identify customers who are dissatisfied as quickly as possible.

One the most important successes of social networking sites is its ability to keep distributed groups of people communicating, even if it is indirectly. The sites achieve this by providing users with an assortment of trouble-free communication mechanisms that require different levels of interaction. The simplicity of the interface also lessens the time required to use the site, which in turn assists in making it accessible to a large audience (Harvey 2010:141).

2.3.8.2 Disadvantages

Although social media offers many advantages, it is also important to note that it has many challenges or disadvantages as well.

Firstly, social media usage raises the appearance of scams and risks when engaging with social media. Although the social communities are prosperous, there are still scams and risks that are also thriving, such as data leakages. (Popular mechanics 2010:61-62).

Furthermore, social media ‘squattIng’ is a new trend that is emerging in social media, which is similar to that of domain name squatting. This situation can be described as one where a stranger pretend to be the business itself, its chief executive officer (CEO), or own the trademark space of the business. The emergence of social media squatting and sophisticated social engineering schemes are now bringing a change to the social media landscape, where the consequences can be lost productivity,
damage to the Brand reputation as well as physical harm to employees. (Popular mechanics 2010:61-62).

Another disadvantage associated with social media usage is that peoples’ business and personal lives become intertwined. As social media has evolved many individuals have lost the balance between their business and personal lives. They no longer keep a clear separation between their work and family as important business information is shared with the family and laptops and computers are now used for both business and personal use. When users mix their business and personal lives, they have an increased responsibility to pay careful attention on what they post on the site and who can see the posts. As a result of this situation the benefits of these sites is reduced as users are now censoring what they post on the site, which may affect the personal weak ties they are maintaining through its use (Popular mechanics 2010:61-62).

When using social media individuals and businesses are faced with the challenges of trust and privacy as millions of people joins social networking sites and creates a profile on the site, sharing their personal information with a vast amount of people, without knowing that they can trust everyone. Furthermore, guaranteeing privacy on social networking sites are also far more difficult than offline. Therefore, online social networks pose trust and privacy challenges to users of the sites (Dwyer, Hiltz & Passerini 2007).

Another disadvantage linked to utilising social media is that it requires businesses to devote their time and commitment to the SNS they choose to use. The true cost of using social media lies in the time and commitment to promote and market the brand. The problem associated with the use of social media is that a company, organisation or institution cannot commit to social media half heartedly. When engaging with social media it is important that full commitment is required to receive benefits (Wikström & Wigmo 2010:36).

The use of social media usage could also result in individuals and businesses making inappropriate status updates. The use of status fields used by individuals to post brief updates can also be problematic, because it might be desirable to target
these updates to different groups of contacts. Some status updates may be considered inappropriate by certain groups of individuals in a user’s contact list (Harvey 2010:146).

Even though social media usage can assist in improving the reputation of brands, it can also sometimes *harm a brand* as customers or users are now able to voice their dissatisfaction almost immediately (Seppä 2008).

Further problems associated with social network usage are that users (employees) already have accounts with mainstream sites. These accounts will have been previously used for personal use by the users and they will wish to continue to use their accounts for this purpose. Due to their accounts previously being used for personal use it may include content and information, which these users wish to not share with their colleagues. Although most social networking sites provide users with quite *meticulous privacy controls*, the most popular sites *do not provide the differentiation* that many users would need if they are to use the site for both business and personal use (Harvey 2010:146).

### 2.3.9 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE SUCCESSFUL USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

An important challenge faced by marketers is that they need to maintain the incredible success of Web 2.0 in the future as online social networks is continuously growing, evolving and developing. There is currently an increased demand to understand this new social phenomenon, to understand the process through which communities come together, attract new members and develop over time. Furthermore, there is a need to understand what is needed to empower online communities with the ability to attract and retain a core group of members who actively participate (Caverlee & Webb 2008).

Based on an analysis of numerous early successes and failures of companies using social media, Barwise and Meehan (2010:84) identified four factors critical to the successful use of social media.
The starting point of any marketing campaign is to begin with the brand promise and then to use this promise as the guideline for all the actions taken in using social media. It is important to not get sidetracked by the abundance of options. This guideline highlights that it is important for marketers of a brand to not forget and disregard their traditional marketing strategies when embarking on the use of social media, but rather combine the two methods.

Although many businesses can and do trade products and services via social media, the real value at this point in time with social media usage is the ability to learn about the customer. One of the social networking sites that have good potential to provide this type of information is Facebook. This site has the ability to provide comprehensive quantitative analyses of communication flows between customers. Over time new natural-language-processing technology will assist marketers to extract additional insights from the content of their customers’ discussions. Businesses that sponsor online brand communities on the other hand can immediately gather relevant insights from direct and small-scale interactions.

The small number of brands that have been able to considerably improve their sales through the use of social media have achieved this through communications that convey authenticity and relevance, which is so entertaining that they go viral. The main aim of businesses when using social media is that they should strive to go viral, while still protecting their brands.

The conversations that take place on social media with regards to brands are regularly unstructured or semi-structured and moderated by the individuals who participate in the conversation by utilising unwritten rules. People who participate in the conversations join in freely due to the ability to enjoy and learn from the conversation. When a business is accepted into the conversation, they can join in and to some extent influence the participants. Therefore, the individuals within the business who is responsible for the social media strategy must be familiar and comfortable with the culture and rules of each social network used. Furthermore, these individuals should have a deep knowledge about the business and its brand and values (Barwise & Meehan 2010:84).
In addition, Wikström and Wigmo (2010:43) propose six recommendations that organisations can use when utilising social media.

- The first aspect to consider when considering the use of social media to market an institution is the formulation of goals of what needs to be accomplish when using social media. These goals might be to gain increased customer recognition, customer awareness or an improved Brand image.

- Furthermore, the institution needs to develop a sound strategy with which it will set out to achieve the goals set. When developing the strategy it is important to start off with the traditional marketing and communication strategies developed that are already being used. When developing a social media strategy it is also advisable to make use of traditional marketing theories, such as the five P model, namely product, price, place, public relations and positioning. Another important aspect is that the institution should develop a set of guidelines pertaining to social media usage.

- The third recommendation for social media usage is that the marketing communicators should decide which social media tool they will utilise, keeping in mind their goals, strategy and target demographics. There are a number of aspects to keep in mind when choosing a social media tool, such as speed, ease of use and purpose in mind. The social media tool Twitter for example is quick, whereas blogs are powerful in the performance and Facebook is mainstream, meaning that it reaches a large audience. The easiest form of social media to start social media marketing with is Blogs, due to its low level of usage restrictions. It is also important that marketing communicators should have a purpose with every social media tool that they choose to use.

- Wikström and Wigmo (2010:43) further propose marketing strategies that marketing communicators can consider when using social media tools to market their businesses. Marketing communicators should focus on commitment and continuity of the business, by dedicating people who will be responsible for ensuring the effective use of social media (Carlsson 2009 cited in Wikström & Wigmo 2010:6). They should not neglect the community within
which they operate for long periods of time. The institution needs to be transparent in the message that they are trying to convey and must not be afraid to lose absolute control. The marketing communicators should always make use of their authority to communicate to their customers (students). It is important for the marketers in charge of posting the information on the social media tools to ensure that they make use of high quality content (Wikström & Wigmo 2010:43).

- When conveying information and marketing messages to customers (students) it is beneficial to use personal and informal behaviour. The marketers should operate as brand builders and not as someone who pushes the information onto the customer (student) (Wikström & Wigmo 2010:43). To ensure the success of social media usage it is important that there is more than one person that is involved in representing the business on social media tools in order to prevent running the risk that the business’s opinion is communicated to the users and not the opinion of one person (Wikström & Wigmo 2010:6). The tone and manner of the language used in the marketing message when utilising a social network should be more personal and sociable then the typical language used on brochures or websites. The rational for using this type of language is due to the fact that the primary aim of using social networks is to build a community around promoting, sharing, discussions, the company, organisation or institution (Brown 2009 cited in Wikström & Wigmo 2010:11).

- The last recommendation is that marketing communicators should not consider the use of social media as being difficult and non-accomplishable, because social media usage is mostly common sense and comes naturally (Wikström & Wigmo 2010:43).

In order to ensure that a business use social media and a SNS successfully it is important for marketing communicators to note that when they approach a social network it is imperative to be creative. Instead of forcing a marketing message through to recipients to ensure success with social media usage, marketing communicators need to add value to the interactions as well as use the naturally viral personality of the targeted community. When using social media and social networks to market, communication with the people is needed before embarking on selling anything to them. This signifies that traditional promotions and advertising
campaigns should not be forced onto the prospective customers immediately. (Wikström & Wigmo 2010:11).

Regular use of the SNS is essential to fully understand the context and concentrate on what is being said amongst the community and the targeted audience, before embarking on the full on use of the social network (Wikström & Wigmo 2010:11).

When faced with social media challenges or disadvantages there are some proactive steps that organisations can take in order to minimise the potential damage and to strengthen their security posture. Firstly, marketing communicators must have a thorough understanding of both the authorised as well as the large amount of unauthorised social media users that are within their organisations. Secondly, formal education and training plans should be in place within the company that will assist in meeting the needs of all the aspects to the business. Lastly, a vital factor for organisations to consider is that they should have social networking policies and monitoring systems in place and another essential aspect for organisations is to have a strong organisational feedback structure (Popular mechanics 2010:61).

Even though many businesses are starting to embrace social media for new growth prospects, the businesses that will be successful with their implementation of social media and the transformation of their businesses in the long run are those who are best prepared (Popular mechanics 2010:62). Furthermore, those businesses that will be able to best leverage social media will be those who has a complete understanding of the rewards, but also the risks involved with social media, as well as being prepared with the most efficient methods for monitoring and policy enforcement (Popular mechanics 2010:64).

2.4 THE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA BY HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS (HEIs)

The primary focus and interest that businesses have in social networking as part of social media is to distribute content and advertise their businesses. The potential opportunities and impact that it has for businesses is however far greater than these
two uses. (Parameswaran & Whinston 2007:763). Although social media is regarded as an important element for marketing a business, it is becoming increasingly important for the marketing communicators of HEIs to make use of the available social networking sites to market their institutions to current and prospective students.

In a study conducted on the use of social media for college admission in the United States of America, various key findings have been found (Falkow 2010) that indicates the popularity of social media being used by HEIs in that country. The participants to the study were based on four year accredited colleges and universities found within the United States of America. The key findings include the following:

- It has been found that 95% of university and college admissions offices use at least one form of social media. This percentage grew by 34% from the 67% of 2007 and 10% from 2008’s 85%.
- The usage for almost every social media tool included in the three year study has increased.
- Social networking is the most frequently used form of social media used by colleges and universities, indicating that 87% of admissions departments make use of social media.
- It has been found that 59% of colleges’ and universities’ admission departments have an active Twitter account.
- 51% of colleges’ and universities’ admission departments have a blog where they post information and nearly all of the colleges and universities using a blog are using other forms of social media too.
- Almost half of colleges and universities in the United States (46%) are using online videos to deliver virtual visits to the hostel rooms, virtual tours of campuses and sample lectures from a particular faculty.
- Furthermore, it has been found that 38% of colleges’ and universities’ admission departments utilises message boards; 22% make use podcasts and 13% use wikis.
- Lastly, 91% of the respondents that participated in the study believe social media to be important for their recruitment strategies (Falkow 2010).
HEIs can utilise social media as a marketing and communication tool to make the public aware of their institution. The sections to follow will highlight how HEIs can use social media as a marketing and communication tool as well as what the concerns are when they use social media.

2.4.1 SOCIAL MEDIA AS A MARKETING TOOL

Marketers are able to utilise social networking, which is one element of social media, as a marketing tool. These social networks are mainly free to its users/members and are inclined to rely on advertising to gain their revenue. The demographic information that is collected through social networking sites enables marketers to direct and target their advertisement to a particular audience (Stokes 2008:134).

Furthermore, marketers can use applications as a means to advertise and market their products. When businesses create useful applications that are relevant to a particular product, it has the ability to expose a completely new audience to the offerings of the business. The businesses are also able to collect detailed information about their users through the use of applications (Stokes 2008:134).

The idea of marketing an HEI to the public in order to attract attention, improve its image and increase its student base emerged in the mid-1980’s (Stagno 2010:3). Social media has a lot of potential for marketing to and reaching customers, including students, as this type of media is used to a large extent (Stagno 2010:4).

It is important to identify the strategic position of Web 2.0 within the context of the overall marketing strategy of businesses and HEIs when considering Web 2.0 from a marketing perspective. Furthermore, marketers should also identify what the basic requirements are for the successful engagement of social media as a marketing tool. Web 2.0 should be seen as relating to any of the other marketing efforts, which is illustrated in Figure 2.4. In other words, Web 2.0 should fit or be in line with the overall marketing plan of businesses or HEIs. When considering Web 2.0 as a marketing tool, it can be considered as the pinnacle point of the marketing process.
and therefore forms the top part of the marketing strategy pyramid (Constantinides et al. 2008:13).

Web 2.0 applications have grown in popularity, because of the benefits that they offer to users such as transparency, referrals and contact with other users as well as the effect that they have on customer power. In this new era of Web 2.0 and social media, customer preferences and customer decisions are increasingly based on the inputs that they receive, which is provided by other users and that is beyond the control of online marketers. These inputs mainly come from referrals, peer reviews, tagging, blogs, social networks, online forums and other user-generated content uncontrollable by marketers (Constantinides & Fountain 2008:239).

**Figure 2.4: The marketing strategy pyramid**

Each one of these stages of the marketing strategy pyramid (Figure 2.4) and how it relates to developing a strategy for using social media as a marketing tool will be discussed in the paragraphs below.
Stage 1: The first aspect to consider when developing a marketing strategy is that the basis of the strategy must be the quality of the business’s product and services. This quality should reflect the business’s vision, market image as well as market positioning (Constantinides et al. 2008:13). When a business fail to deliver the quality expected by customers, the use of social media can be considered as risky, due to the fact that customers are now able to find out the truth of whether the business deliver the actual promised value through getting in touch with their users and/or product reviewers. Therefore, quality systems and control mechanisms are considered as being imperative strategic components during this stage (Constantinides et al. 2008:14).

Stage 2: This stage refers to the process of creating and maintaining a market-orientated business or organisation that will be able to support the traditional and the online marketing activities of the business (Constantinides et al. 2008:14).

Stage 3: The third stage in developing a strategy for using social media as a marketing tool is that a business should create market-orientated organisations or businesses that support traditional as well as online marketing activities as it is essential to establishing a successful online presence in the form of a website. Websites plays a number of roles, including an informational, promotional, relational, educational or transactional role and it is imperative for marketers to assign the right roles for online businesses in order to become a valuable part of the overall marketing programme (Constantinides et al. 2008:14).

Stage 4: When a business has an impeccable online presence it will enable them to move onto the last and fourth stage, namely the involvement of Web 2.0 in the marketing strategy of the business. Usually the corporate website of the business is the first and sometimes the only place that online customers will go to when they become aware of the business and their experience of the website should be of the highest quality. When businesses have achieved this they can proceed to identifying and selecting the proper Web 2.0 tools to incorporate in their strategic marketing programmes (Constantinides et al. 2008:14).
The use of social media as a marketing tool provides HEIs with the ability to communicate with their customers (students). In order to appear more human than a traditional business it is important for an institution to communicate with their customers (students) in a generous and friendly manner (Wikström & Wigmo 2010:20). Using this approach can hold many benefits for the institution as it will lead to the improvement of their customer relations as well as possible marketing through positive word-of-mouth (Wikström & Wigmo 2010:20). Facebook is one of the most popular social media tools that HEIs could use to keep in contact with their alumni members. Social media offers the professionals and strategic marketers responsible for improving the brand of the university exceptional opportunities to keep in touch with the alumni members after they have graduated from the institution (Reuben 2008:11).

In order for HEIs to successfully compete in the national and international marketplace they realised that they have to formulate a marketing strategy and adopt a marketing program. The traditional marketing fundamentals used by the business environment do not fully meet the needs of HEIs’ marketing as the business related marketing fundamentals are primarily based on consumptive models (Stagno 2010:3). Therefore, it has been suggested that HEIs’ marketing must be analysed from a model of collaborative relationships (Stagno 2010:3). The intangibility of the product indicates that HEIs’ marketing efforts should focus on a service model and studies also suggest that their marketing should be conducted with a relationship marketing approach. It has been noted that relationship marketing’s main focus is on retention instead of acquisition (Stagno 2010:4). When considering this from a HEIs’ point of view it relates to creating and sustaining a relationship of value exchange between the institution and three main customer groups, namely: alumni, current students and future prospective students (Stagno 2010:4). The customers’ long-term loyalty to the HEI is positively related to the quality of these relationships. In addition, the relationships found between customers about the brand experience are positively related to these customers’ long-term loyalty (Stagno 2010:4).

For a HEI to fully benefit from using social media they need to be aware of the fact that these social networking sites must be regarded as additional to their overall marketing strategies. For an overall marketing plan to be successful, institutions
should make social media part of this plan. When universities make use of a Website or a SNS, such as Facebook, it is important that the web address and all social networking sites used must be placed on the publications and business cards of the university (Barnes 2009:29).

2.4.2 SOCIAL MEDIA AS A COMMUNICATION TOOL

There are a large number and varied forms of communication forums available on the Internet and include Internet sites such as social networking sites, photo and video sharing sites, blogs and virtual reality environments (Second Life) as well as applications such as email, chat rooms and instant messaging (IM). Compared to the general population, the youth and young adults are the heavy users of the Internet and extensively use it to communicate with their friends (Subrahmanyam, Reich, Waechter & Espinoza 2008:421).

Online social networking sites have experienced enormous levels of success in the social Internet domain and might provide a more scalable solution to a number of the communication problems than the traditional methods of emails and meetings that are commonly used (Harvey 2010:134).

Not only can social media be considered as a new way to reach potential customers, but it also necessitates a new way of thinking. In traditional marketing, marketers are believed to be ‘megaphone communicators’ where they do all the talking, while social media is a two-way communication. This requires normal human behaviour, which includes listening to others talking, being polite and helping others out. Wikström & Wigmo (2010:38).

HEIs are offered interesting possibilities and new tools for communicating with their stakeholders by the development of Web 2.0, which is also known as social media (Stagno 2010:1). In their respective studies Reuben (2008) and Redfern (2009) highlights that social media can be used as a recruitment tool by HEIs as calls to do so has been found on the blogosphere (Stagno 2010:1).
Facebook and MySpace have been around for some time now and new sites are constantly emerging, especially for universities and colleges. Two sites have been developed, offering individual pages for universities and colleges, namely YouTube and iTunes. YouTube and iTunes function differently to Facebook and MySpace as they are primarily used as a distribution vehicle. Instead of using these sites to recruit prospective students, universities and colleges are using them to display their lectures, supply students with videos of guest speakers and events as well as any other information that is available in the form of a video. Even though these sites will mainly be used by the students who are currently enrolled at a particular university or college it can be considered as a good marketing tool, because prospective students will see the products of the institution (Barnes 2009:27).

Lavrusik (2009) proposes several ways that HEIs can use social media to share with, and communicate information to its students, namely:

- **Gathering and sharing information:** When using social media, the most common way it is being utilised for is for users to share information about themselves and what they find interesting concerning others. Being educational institutions, universities primarily make use of social media in order to draw attention to the resources that they make available to the public and their academic experts. To accomplish this, universities post news on Facebook, Tweet on Twitter and publicise news relating to and involving the university in mainstream media sources. The aim of universities using social media is to attempt educating individuals about the university and to provide them with a glimpse of what the educational institution is about. An important aspect to note is that universities use social media tools to supplement the traditional forms of media and marketing tools, such as press releases, that they send out.

- **Showcasing student and faculty work:** HEIs often use social media not only to share information and news, but to showcase the work of their faculties and students. To inform people of the faculties’ and students’ achievements can be achieved through something as simple as photos being posted on the Facebook page or a sophisticated video posted on YouTube.
Providing a platform to broadcast events: Some HEIs utilise social media tools to provide people with a place where the university community can participate in and engage with events as it is taking place at the university, instead of only using these tools to promote particular events. These tools include placing live streaming videos on the university website, to broadcast a seminar or presentation taking place or the collection of tweets on Twitter to obtain people’s views on events taking place.

Emergency notification: It is a reality that tragedies and emergencies take place and with social media tools’ growing popularity, universities can use these tools to spread news about a tragedy or emergency quicker and easier. This can be achieved through the use of Facebook messages or posts and Tweets that complement the text messages and emails that are sent out.

Connecting people: By using social media tools, HEIs offers the community with a place where they can connect with one another and to gather around similar interests at the university.

Producing, not just promoting: Universities are now using social media in order to target non-traditional media like blogs and journalists and no longer only target traditional media outlets. Universities make use of social media as a publishing tool to connect directly with their target markets and do not simply rely on a news organisation to pick up a story.

Creating a dialogue and communicating to students: Social media can be distinguished from other Web tools as its primary concern is to have a conversation and therefore provide two-way communication and creates the opportunity for real discussion. HEIs utilise social media tools to be able to engage with the public through Facebook posts, blog comments and Tweets.

Time devoted to Facebook chats: This concept of devoting time to Facebook is sometimes referred to as Facebook office hours and can be considered as a four-part process. This process enables students to ask questions to professionals of the university where they will receive responses to their questions by videos created and posted on Facebook by the professionals, which result in the conversation and exchange of information between students and professionals being able to take place. Firstly, HEIs can post a note on Facebook that describe and promote the academic and non-academic staff of the university as well as host their office hours of when they will be available on
Secondly, videos can be uploaded where academics talk about their work and research. Thirdly, when these videos have been uploaded, interested parties are allowed to ask the hosting members questions by commenting on the videos. Finally, in order to answer these questions, academic staff responds by making a second video and answering each comment.

- **Improvement of HEI professionals’ communication abilities:** HEIs are mainly producing their own audio and video, which they can upload on their website or a SNS like YouTube. This enables journalists, television and radio producers the opportunity to see these experts in action. Furthermore, this can result in these experts being invited to appear on radio or television news shows, being used on television panels or as an interview sources, which all contribute to valuable exposure for the university.

- **Getting wired via mobile:** HEIs can make use of the newly developed iPhone application that enables students to register for their classes and to look for campus maps that can assist in guiding them to their classes.

The ten methods proposed by Lavrusik (2009) can be utilised by HEIs to effectively communicate their brand image to their various stakeholders in an attempt to improve the way in which their brand is perceived by their stakeholders. The focus of this study is on the use of social media by a HEI. The rationale to use social media in an attempt to determine the image that it has on the brand image of a HEI can be supported by one of the methods proposed by Lavrusik (2009), namely the provision of a platform to broadcast events, where social media tools enables HEIs to interact and engage with the current and prospective students as well as other stakeholders.

### 2.4.3 CONCERNS FOR SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE BY HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS (HEIs)

When HEIs consider using or use social media within their institutions they are faced with a number of concerns, such as the loss of control, time commitment, information overload and the ability of illegal account creation (Reuben 2008:7). Each one of these concerns will be discussed in the paragraphs to follow.
2.4.3.1 Loss of control

The concern for loss of control relates to the comments feature found on blog pages. HEIs that make use of a blog can be regarded as being controversial and the process of allowing two-way communication through the opening up of the comments feature can be terrifying. An institution can however choose to turn this feature off, but deciding to do this does not mean that the negativity about the institution will disappear due to its decision not to participate. It has been noted that the awareness of negative commentary provides an institution with the opportunity to change the existing perception that they did or did not know of (Reuben 2008:7).

When a HEI makes use of a MySpace page, Facebook page or any other form of social media tool to market its institution, it is faced with forums where people can leave their comments and where these forums have the possibility of collecting negative feedback or remarks. Although this might be the case, most institutions using social media tools consider these features to be helpful, positive and resourceful rather than causing harm. This is due to the ability of social media tools to endorse unsolicited, genuine positive feedback and clear up misconceptions, which is invaluable for marketers and prospective students alike (Reuben 2008:8).

Social applications have been identified as connecting people to one another and therefore frequently move in unexpected directions. As a result of this occurrence, in addition to the careful planning associated with marketing campaign, these social applications (social networking sites) furthermore also require flexibility on part of the creators or administrators of the page. Within these newly formed online communities, popular movements can occur, causing the marketing communicators or institutions’ management to become uneasy. It is important for managers to however note that if the needs and desires are present, individuals will find a means of connecting in the broader Internet. It is therefore important that the business or institution focus on identifying ways in which they can manage communication
channels to ensure that the business or institution can reap the benefits (Bernoff & Li 2008:40).

For marketers to derive value and benefits for using Web 2.0 they should focus on a philosophy or mindset that entails relinquishing some control for certain processes as this will allow customers in the case of a business or students in the case of HEIs more direct input into driving the value proposition of the business or institution. It is important to remember that certain process should and will be controlled and managed by the marketers of the business or institution, while other processes can draw benefit from an emergent approach where the customers or student generate content in real-time (Parise & Guinan 2008:1).

Although HEIs might be faced with the concern of loss of control, not being able to control the messages or fully control the perceptions of their current and prospective students, by being engaged in the conversation they can assist in steering the messages in the right direction (Reuben 2008:8).

2.4.3.2 Time commitment

When a HEI decide to make use of a social media tool or tools as part of their marketing mix they should considered that they will have to spend at least one to ten hours per week on these tools. The amount of time they will have to spend depends on how many social media tools they utilise, how extensive their presence is within these tools and how actively these tools are used by their audiences (Reuben 2008:8).

Numerous Higher Education professionals however deal with hefty workloads and perform various roles within their institutions that sometimes make it difficult for them to stay afloat with successfully marketing their institutions to their customers as well as successfully complete their work assigned to them. When HEIs decide to make use of social media to market their institutions the situation can become time sensitive and they must identify a strategic reason for implementing the use of social media as well as have a high-quality plan in place to use the social media tools. (Reuben 2008:8). The need for a strategic reason and good implementation plan is
because it is highly unlikely that social media tools will replace traditional marketing communication tools. The social media tool will most probably be used in conjunction with other forms of marketing tools to complement these tools that are already being used. (Reuben 2008:8).

An important aspect to note is that HEIs should for example not create a Facebook page only because their competitors have a Facebook page. When deciding to create a Facebook page they should ensure that they will be able to regularly add content, quickly respond and take advantage of the wall posts. When deciding whether a HEI should start a blog they need to ensure that they will be able to always keep the blog up-to-date by blogging at least once a week and moderate comments on the blog daily (Reuben 2008:8).

As mentioned above, it is very important to note that managing a SNS requires a vast amount of time commitment by the administrators of the page. For page administrators to get into the habit of regularly posting new updates, they should consider drawing up a schedule where they commit themselves to posting the updates regularly, such as for example once a week. When the administrators feel that they do not have the time to solely commit to this responsibility, they can consider sharing the responsibility of uploading content amongst multiple administrators, which enables more than one person to upload content. (Parker 2011:99).

2.4.3.3 Information overload

Another concern that HEIs face using social media is that it could result in information overload. With the introduction of social media numerous forms of media has developed that admission departments and staff members utilise in order to communicate with current and prospective students. This vast amount of media has resulted in Facebook friends, Twitter friends, MySpace friends and people who follow blogs, to mention just a few, find themselves in a situation where they are overloaded with information when trying to keep up to date with traditional media, such as print publications, e-mail and instant messaging (Reuben 2008:8).
When HEIs make use of social media to promote and market their institutions it is important they obtain the correct balance between keeping the content that they upload fresh and not to upload to frequently so that the people who ‘like’ their page does not become inundated with the brand name in their news feed (Parker 2011:99). This will make the individuals feel as though they are overloaded and bombarded with too much information that could lead to them losing interest in the brand.

### 2.4.3.4 Illegal account creation

The last concern that HEIs face when deciding to use or are already using social media as part of their marketing campaigns is the concern of any individual being able to illegally create an ‘official’ account for their institution (Reuben 2008:9).

Factors that creators of ‘official’ university accounts need to take into consideration are to search their name on a social media platform to determine how many search results there is for the same name. When the institution does not already have an account on a social platform, creating one on the platform can be advised as this will enable them to reserve the institution’s name until they are ready to actively utilise the site to market their institution. (Reuben 2008:9).

Some institutions and businesses might find that there already exists a page on a SNS, such as Facebook for their institution or business, but instead of considering this presence as a threat, rather consider it as a compliment. When faced with such a situation, the institution or business should not focus on competing against these individuals who have created the page, but rather use the individuals’ brand loyalty to their advantage (Parker 2011:102).

### 2.4.4 LEGAL AND ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR SOCIAL MEDIA USE BY HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS (HEIs)

A complicated decision regarding the use of social media is to make admission decisions that are based on the information obtained only online from blogs, social networking sites, search engines as well as other sources. From this information the
questions come up relating to the ethical use of this information and material acquired online as well as the legal implications that it has for the university or college who decide to make their admission decisions based partially or wholly on the information they gathered online. (Barnes 2009:32).

Currently there is not a lot of case law and guidance relating to the use of social media, due to the fact that not many cases have been tested in court. It has been noted that when an employer, university or college access an individual’s Facebook or MySpace profile or photos it cannot be considered as an invasion of privacy, because once the information has been posted on Facebook or MySpace it is available to the public and has a lower expectation of privacy (Barnes 2009:32).

A number of universities and colleges now make use of disclaimers on their websites and home pages that they may use any material available to the public like social networking sites and blogs as part of their review process. The online community and numerous organisations that work with the ethical use of online information publicise this type of transparency (Barnes 2009:32).

Stagno (2010:9) stresses the importance of ethical Higher Education and social media marketing. Information regarding the ethical marketing and use of social media by HEIs will be discussed in the paragraphs below.

2.4.4.1 Ethical Higher Education marketing

Kotler and Fox (1985:6) cited in Hemsley-Brown and Oplatka (2006:319-320), developed a general definition of education marketing and stated that marketing in the context of education can be considered as the analysis, planning, implementation and control of carefully formulated programmes that is designed to result in the voluntary exchanges of values with a particular target groups to achieve the organisational objectives of the institution.

During earlier years of academia, marketing was a term that was only spoken about in hushed voices. Anderson (2008), cited in Stagno (2010:9), states that the academic resistance to the concept of the managerial university was primarily
related to matters concerning traditional academic core values such as the ability to analyse, assess and criticise. The possibility of compromising academic standards of excellence and quality through the managerial practices such as the marketing of HEIs is one of the most important issues that the academics have against these managerial practices being implemented (Anderson 2008:256 cited in Stagno 2010:9). Due to the fact that marketing is a managerial practice it has now become an ethical issue as it was believed to go against the core beliefs and values of an academic institution (Stagno 2010:9).

The majority of HEIs are now recognising that it is important that they market their institutions in a competitive climate that is often a globally competitive environment (Hemsley-Brown & Oplatka 2006:318). A considerable amount of literature on the transfer of concepts and practices of marketing from other sectors to HEIs has been developed by, amongst others, Gibbs (2002) cited in Hemsley-Brown and Oplatka (2006:318). Nguyen and Le Blanc’s (2001) study cited in Hemsley-Brown and Oplatka (2006:318), placed emphasis on the image and reputation of an institution and referred to the critical role that these specific factors played in the development of market positioning (Hemsley-Brown & Oplatka 2006:318).

By considering the marketing of a HEI from an ethical point of view, it has been proposed to be viewed from a relationship marketing perspective. From this perspective it is important that the marketing practices must be of high-quality for the academic community and be aligned with the goals and the mission of the academic institution (Gibbs & Murphy 2009 cited in Stagno 2010:9). For a HEI to market its institution ethically through traditional marketing mediums it should adhere to the following three guidelines:

1. Marketing principles are not the drivers of an institution, but rather the honourable strengths of the leaders of the institutions to remain true to their values (Stagno 2010:9).
2. Relationship marketing should be considered as an ethical approach to marketing of an institution (Gibbs & Murphy 2009:351 cited in Stagno 2010:9).
3. The institutions’ marketing philosophies sustain and enhance academic values through the application of holistic marketing (Stagno 2010:9).
2.4.4.2 Ethical social media marketing

Three guidelines regarding the ethical use of social media by HEIs has also been proposed by Stagno (2010:9) in order to ensure that users of social networking sites do not become victims of unethical social media marketing practices.

Firstly, one of the social media principles allows any individual to post or add content to a social media site, which makes it difficult for users to determine the legitimacy of the content. A problem that occurs on these sites is that even false content are trusted. Faulty or false content however does not have a long lifespan as it is usually assessed and then the community warns one another of the faulty or false content (Stagno 2010:9). Although this warning occurs, an organisation’s reputation can sometimes suffer serious damage when this faulty or false content is published. As a result of this it is important for an organisation to ensure their authenticity and be transparent in their communications through social media, from both an ethical and managerial point of view (Stagno 2010:10).

Secondly, social media users frequently share personal information online, which results in privacy issues arising. Even though social media users have to agree beforehand to have their personal information publicised the use of this information might be ethically doubtful. It is therefore important that organisations have set standards of conduct relating to this issue (Hayes, Ruschman & Walker 2009 cited in Stagno 2010:10).

Lastly, social media can be utilised as an advertising medium, which can reach a large market. Although this wide reach of target markets can be achieved through the use of social media it is regarded as going against the principle of engagement in social media. Therefore, it is important that the marketing efforts should engage users into the conversation so that the users will be able to determine whether the content is popular. Therefore, seeing social media as the platform for which it was planned, instead of viewing it as an advertising platform can be regarded as a far more ethically sound method of practising social media marketing (Stagno 2010:10).
2.5 NATURE AND IMPORTANCE OF FACEBOOK AS A SOCIAL MEDIA TOOL

A social media tool and SNS that has grown in popularity is Facebook. Facebook can be regarded as a social utility with the primary purpose of connecting individuals with their family, friends and others who live, study or work around them. Most people utilise Facebook to learn more about the people that they meet, keep up with their friends, share links and videos with others and to upload an infinite number of photos (Reuben 2008:3).

In 2010 the SNS, Facebook’s user group (population) was not only larger that most of the world’s nations, but it was also the second highest search engine, close to Google who came first, in terms of the number of hits per day as well as the amount of time that its user spent on the site. The Generation Y group (those individuals who was born in 1976 to 1999) can now be regarded as using Facebook as an alternative to email. During February 2010, the Nielsen research indicated that Google had 154 million people for a time period of an hour, whereas 118 million users spend at least 6.5 hours each on Facebook. This research indicates that Facebook is much stickier in terms of where people spend their time as opposed to Google (Botha et al. 2011:43).

Facebook can be considered as being a university or college-orientated SNS, which provides these institutions with opportunities to combine online and face-to-face interactions within a seemingly bounded domain (Gross & Acquisti 2005). Due to Facebook’s popularity in sharing information with students, the researcher has chosen Facebook as the sample SNS in order to conduct this research on the impact of selected branding elements on the Brand image of a HEI, through the use of social media. The NMMU has an established Facebook page that resulted in the researcher having access to the page and users who could form part of the sample group. Another reason for choosing Facebook above Twitter is due to Facebook having a more intimate and focused nature.
Ellison et al. (2007:1144) draws the distinction between the use of Facebook for social browsing, which can be defined as the use of the site to develop new connections, occasionally with the aim of offline interaction and social searching, which can be seen as the process of acquiring information about offline contacts (Joinson 2008). The SNS, Facebook, provide its users with a surveillance function, which enables them to monitor and keep track of the beliefs, interests and actions of the larger group to which they belong (Lampe, Ellison & Steinfield 2007 cited in Joinson 2008). The social search and surveillance function available to Facebook users can therefore maybe account for the reason as to why a large number of Facebook users have fairly open privacy settings. If social searching can be considered as being good in the views of the public the reciprocity rules would state that through enabling a degree of surveillance on oneself, one must also be able to engage in a reciprocal surveillance of other individuals (Joinson 2008).

Facebook was created in 2004 and by 2007 it was reported that Facebook had more than 21 million registered users that produced 1.6 billion page views every day (Ellison et al. 2007:1144). There are currently (2011) 668,854,380 registered members on Facebook (Facebook 2011). This SNS is strongly incorporated into the everyday media practices of its users as the typical Facebook user spends around twenty minutes per day on this site and two-thirds of Facebook users log into the site at least once a day (Ellison et al. 2007:1144). Facebook is one of the largest MySQL (Structured Query Language) instillations worldwide, running thousands of databases and is also the second most visited PHP site in the world. In addition, Facebook is the most visited site in the world (Harvey 2010:145).

Facebook launched a high school version of the site in September 2005 in order to take advantage of the success of Facebook among the youth. Furthermore, the Facebook Company initiated communities for commercial organisations in 2006 that lead to almost 22 000 organisations having Facebook directories by November 2006 (Ellison et al. 2007:1144).

Before the Facebook Company opened up their site to non-academic as well as non-US based users, Facebook.com was atypical among social networking sites, because most of the social networks their users built were based on offline,
geographically restricted groups such as the university campus. The site termed these social connections ‘networks’, now expanded to consist of non-university based geographic areas and workplaces. The reflection of these offline communities in the online environment may be seen as leading to the unique forms of use among users (Joinson 2008).

Facebook (2011) provide information on Facebook usage around the world and based on the statistics the ten countries with the largest usage rates are as follow. Table 2.2 indicates the top ten countries in terms of Facebook usage, the total number of Internet users in the country as well as the percentage of the population that uses the Internet. Furthermore, it also provides an indication of the number of Facebook and Internet users as well as the percentage of the entire South African population that uses the Internet in general, where it is for search the Internet, downloading content or visit social media sites (Table 2.2).

Table 2.2: The top ten countries using Facebook

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Number of Facebook users</th>
<th>Number of Internet users</th>
<th>Percentage of the population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>United States of America</td>
<td>155 122 920</td>
<td>488 005 400</td>
<td>51.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>36 533 680</td>
<td>30 000 000</td>
<td>12.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>29 745 780</td>
<td>51 442 100</td>
<td>82.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>28 464 140</td>
<td>35 000 000</td>
<td>45.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>India</td>
<td>25 664 320</td>
<td>100 000 000</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>24 179 360</td>
<td>32 800 000</td>
<td>29.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>23 412 640</td>
<td>29 700 000</td>
<td>29.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>France</td>
<td>21 990 600</td>
<td>44 625 300</td>
<td>68.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2.2 illustrates that South Africa, compared to the top ten countries, uses both Facebook and the Internet at a lower scale. Only 10.8% (5 300 000) of the entire South African population have access to the Internet, where 63.8% of all Internet users have a profile on Facebook where they engage in sharing their views, thoughts, photos and videos with friends, family and acquaintances. When comparing the South African usage and growth with the top ten countries, these numbers can be considered as being impressive, because compared to the number of unique Internet users in South Africa (5.3 million) the Facebook usage percentage is far greater than in other countries. In early 2010, there were 5.3 million Internet users in South Africa and of these users 3.38 million have a Facebook profile, resulting in 64 percent of the online Facebook population using Facebook (Social Media Blog 2011). Furthermore, Check Facebook (2011) states that 73.63 percent of the total South African online population are using Facebook.

As is illustrated in Table 2.2, it can be inferred that a far greater percentage of people that have Internet connections in South Africa use Facebook than evident in other countries such as Germany where only 23.07 percent of the total online population have a profile on Facebook (Social Media Blog 2011). Although these top ten countries have large groups of Facebook users, there are also smaller countries around the world where new Facebook profiles are created on a regular basis. Table 2.3 illustrates the top ten countries with the fastest growing number of new Facebook profiles being created.
Table 2.3: The ten countries with the fastest growing Facebook usage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>% increase</th>
<th>Number of users</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>6.24%</td>
<td>194 360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
<td>457 820</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Paraguay</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>12 160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Guatemala</td>
<td>1.67%</td>
<td>21 820</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Ecuador</td>
<td>1.53%</td>
<td>44 920</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Dominican Republic</td>
<td>1.41%</td>
<td>29 060</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>El Salvador</td>
<td>1.36%</td>
<td>12 400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Nicaragua</td>
<td>1.35%</td>
<td>6 400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Palestine</td>
<td>1.23%</td>
<td>7 140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Peru</td>
<td>1.17%</td>
<td>64 740</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>South African</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>750 000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Facebook (2011).

During May 2011 the fastest growing country with regards to new Facebook users was Japan with a total of 194 360 new Facebook profiles being created (Table 2.3). Furthermore, Brazil also had a big increase in their number of unique Facebook users through the creation of just over 450 000 new profiles being created (Table 2.3).

South Africa is considered as being one of the world’s top growing countries in terms of the growth in its Facebook population. Over the last six months (September 2010
– February 2011) South Africa gained 750 000 new Facebook users, indicating a growth percentage of 25 percent. This indicates that compared to the countries in Table 2.2, South Africa can be considered as the fastest growing country with regards to new Facebook profiles being created (Social Media Blog 2011).

2.6 FEATURES/DIMENSIONS OF FACEBOOK AS A SOCIAL NETWORKING SITE

Facebook comprise of six main components, namely personal profiles, status updates, networks (including schools, companies and geographic regions), applications, groups and fan pages. In November 2007, Facebook launched the fan page feature on their site that resulted in many universities rushing to take advantage of the opportunity to create an official presence for their universities. The primary purpose of fan pages is that it is similar to that of a personal profile but was created for use by businesses. Fan pages include features like discussion boards, wall posts, photos, and videos as well as various other applications. When individuals search for a fan page of a business they have the option to become a fan of the page, which will then be showed on their personal profiles. This resulted in the creation of a viral marketing effect, because when an individual's friends see that they became a fan of a particular organisation who they are also interested in they will most probably also become fans of the page. (Reuben 2008:3).

The SNS, Facebook comprises of a variety of features, including communication, organisational and account configuration features. All of these features will be discussed in the following sub-sections.

2.6.1 COMMUNICATION FEATURES

The communication features of the SNS Facebook comprise of those elements that enables users to communicate and share information about themselves with their
friends, family and acquaintances as well as obtaining information about others. These features include profiles, photos, the poke, the wall and messages, which are discussed in the sections below.

2.6.1.1 Profiles

An essential part of a SNS is the profile as this is where the users provide information about themselves (Gross & Acquisti 2005; Harvey 2010:136). This information include personal information such as the user’s name, relationship status, age, location (network), interests and an ‘about me’ section as well as general information like the user’s year of graduation and hometown (Boyd & Ellison 2008:211; Pempek, Yermolayeva & Calvert 2009:230). A profile may include a photo of the individual or the business, which will be used to represent them throughout the site and will also be placed next to any content that the individual or business produces on the site. A form of micro-blogging allow users of social networking sites to enter brief messages to indicate to others what they are doing through the use of a status field that is often provided by these sites. The other users of the site that is connected to the user that entered the status message are notified of the changes that enable these users to keep up-to-date with what other people are doing. Other uses of profiles include finding details about other people’s interest as well as finding contact details of others, which is a useful way of helping to get in contact with someone (Gross & Acquisti 2005; Harvey 2010:136).

2.6.1.2 Photos

The majority of social networking sites allow users to upload photos, which is organisable into albums and the sites also enable users to share their photos with other users (Harvey 2010:137; Pempek et al. 2009:230). Photos are regarded as one of Facebook’s most popular features. By the end of 2010, Facebook had 60 billion user photos on the site and it was estimated that there will be 100 million by the American summer (June/July 2011) (Online Marketing Trends 2010). All the different Facebook users that appear on a photo can be ‘tagged’, which will then provide a link to their profile pages (Harvey 2010:137; Pempek et al. 2009:230). Users are capable of commenting on the photos that are uploaded onto Facebook
and is displayed below the photo, which permits feedback to be collected or discussions to take place (Pempek et al. 2009:230). The primary purpose of the extremely popular SNS Flickr is to share photos on the Web. Some sites also allow for the hosting of videos where users can comment on them. Major advantages of authorising people to place content in a single place, where a large number of people will be selected to view it or be exposed to it, is that it leads to quicker sharing of information as well as provide a large storage capacity, which makes it an ideal place to back up photos (Harvey 2010:137).

2.6.1.3 The poke

The poke provides the most basic form of interaction among users of the site and is a unique feature of Facebook (Harvey 2010:137). When using the poke on Facebook, it is considered as a person reaching out to someone else in the online world and virtually touching them (The Poke 2011). This feature informs a user when they have been poked as well as who poked them (Harvey 2010:137; The Poke 2011). Although this feature was implemented with no specific purpose it is commonly used to attract the attention of another user. The benefits on this Facebook feature may not be instantaneously obvious. However, the poke can often act as a precursor to further communication and provides a means of telling people that they are not forgotten.

2.6.1.4 The wall

Various social networking sites offer the feature to send public messages to a user by making use of a comment wall. The wall can be described as a place on a user’s profile where the other users that they are associated to can post messages, which will be visible to all the other users that have authority to view that profile. The post made on a user’s wall is accompanied by information relating to when it was sent as well as who sent it (Harvey 2010:137). Yeung, Liccardi, Lu, Seneviratne and Berners-Lee (2008) describe the wall as a place where users can accept information from others. Any new message that is posted to the user’s wall will become visible in their individual news feed (Harvey 2010:137; The Poke 2011). The purpose of this feature is to enable users to leave short messages that are of temporal nature and
where there is no concern over who is able to view these messages. The main reason why users choose to use this feature is when the time within which the other user sees the message is important, is due to the fact that the wall post appear on the first page the users see when they log onto Facebook. Some social networking sites make it possible for users to view the entire back and forth conversation between them and another user in one place that makes it easier to read (Harvey 2010:137).

2.6.1.5 Messages

Social networking sites enable users to send private messages to individual users or a group of friends, which is similar to that of emails (Pempek et al. 2009:230). Although these messages are similar to that of emails it does not intend on replacing personal emails. Instead the purpose of these messages is to provide users with a way to interact privately with one another through the site. Messages are expected to be chosen in situations where the message was previously considered as being too short for an email where messages are used for briefer and more conversation-like communication. The replies to these messages on Facebook is kept with the original message, which means that the thread of any discussion is kept together and displayed in a format that is easier to read than it would be when communicating via email (Harvey 2010:138).

Another application has been introduced by Facebook that enables users to send synchronised messages where they can communicate with those that they are connected to in real time. This application is known as the chat application. Users often desire this integration of synchronous communication as it keeps everything in one place. Although this form of chat is available on Facebook, more popular, thorough and established chat applications and programs exist. Several of these chat applications and programmes provide users with the ability to save the conversations that they engage in, which enables them to keep a record of what has been said and who said it. These records can be useful for future reference (Harvey 2010:138).
2.6.2 ORGANISATIONAL FEATURES

Numerous social networking sites offer ways to group users. These groups can then be utilised to restrict access to certain content. The ability to create these groups can be open or constrained to any member of the site (Harvey 2010:138). During the organisational features section a variety of usable features will be discussed, namely groups, ‘friends’ list and events.

2.6.2.1 Groups

Communities or groups are frequently created based on some form of shared interest like a hobby or a club. The membership of these communities and group can be controlled by the creator so that they can be in charge of who is able to join and who can invite individuals to join and remove members if needed. Often only registered members of the site are able to view the group pages. A group makes it possible for individuals to come together and talk about different subjects and these groups also provide them with a page showing a list of its members and any activity taking place. A common feature that Facebook included in the message feature on their site is the ability to send messages to all the members of a particular group. Through providing a space for discussions, individuals are giving a chance to provide feedback and these discussions allows for this feedback to be gathered from the group as well as for asynchronous interactions between a larger number of users (Harvey 2010:138).

In order to ensure the effectiveness of a group on a SNS it is important to frequently post new discussions topics to ensure that people stay engaged with the group and stimulate activity. Some sites also provide users with alternatives to groups that provide users with more control over the features provided to the members on their pages. Another aspect of these pages is that the pages can be made publicly viewable to individuals who are not members of the site, if desired. Updates can be sent to members of the group on a regular basis. Although the members can frequently be sent message, they are generally provided with an option where they
can opt out from receiving the messages. Owners of groups that have advanced
group facilities allow the owners to track the group's usage as well as being provided
with informative statistics on aspects such as how many unique users the group
have, how frequently the site is being visited and who is contributing to the group
(Harvey 2010:139).

2.6.2.2 ‘Friends’ list

The majority of social networking sites are constructed in order to connect to other
users. These connected users can be a diverse and immense number of people.
The ability of people to send messages to subgroups and organise their list of
‘friends’ can be seen as being very useful. The method that a user chooses to
manage their connections is generally flexible and private in order to meet their
individual needs. Individuals who are connected to other people they know in a
business and social environment and wish to separate the content they observe can
consider the abovementioned feature particularly beneficial (Harvey 2010:139). An
individual who has been invited by another user to be their Facebook friend, may
either accept or reject this invitation, which gives an individual control over their

2.6.2.3 Events

Interactions taking place offline can be facilitated by Facebook, by creating
invitations to events or through providing users with online notifications for
gatherings, parties or meetings (Pempek et al. 2009:230). The events feature on
Facebook is a helpful feature that enables users to notify other users about
upcoming events, including information about where and when it will be taking place.
An event can be created by an individual user on Facebook or users who are
associated with a particular group created on Facebook. The creation of an event
allows users to invite members to attend the upcoming event (Harvey 2010:139).
A webpage is often created upon the creation of an event, where all the relevant information is displayed. The restriction of access can be set on an event as well as any relevant content. If a page is created for the event the users could be provided with similar features as those found on their own Facebook profile. This provides them with the ability to upload videos, photos as well as post comment on the wall. By using online events, the creators of events will not only be provided with a useful record of attendance rate and the responses of those invited, but also be informed of someone who is frequently unable to attend the event for any reason. The events feature on Facebook does however not provide users with a mechanism for scheduling events for when users are available. (Harvey 2010:139).

2.6.3 ACCOUNT CONFIGURATION

The account configuration dimension of Facebook is used by individuals to customise and personalise their profiles in order to ease their use of the site as well as to ensure their privacy on the site. News feed, privacy settings, email notifications and extensions are all account configuration features available on Facebook for use by HEIs and are discussed in the sub-sections below.

2.6.3.1 News feed

Many social networking sites supply users with a news feed, showing a list of the most recent activities of the users that they are connected to as keeping up-to-date on what is taking place on a SNS is important. The news feed on Facebook comprise of things like file uploads, birthdays, wall posts, status updates and reminders of upcoming events. (Harvey 2010:140; Pempek et al. 2009:230). The news that is presented to an individual can be filtered enabling users to only view information that they are interested in. When a Facebook user log in to their profile on the site their attention will be drawn to where the new information has been added and provides the user with direct links to view or comment on the information. This feature is beneficial to users who have a large social network of connections as it this awareness makes it easier for them to keep up-to-date with the other users’ activity (Harvey 2010:140).
2.6.3.2 Privacy settings

The ability to determine who will be able to view your information is an extremely important aspect as privacy concerns are high when sharing personal information. Social networking sites offer users with the ability to control their data on the site to a rather fine grain, such as their photos and profile fields. Although these options are available most users still choose to use the default privacy controls. The default options provided by social networking sites that restricts information include groups like everyone, friends of friends and only friends, meaning that only the indentified group will be able to view the user’s information. Customised privacy options can usually be created to include lists of friends and group members that provide users with extra control over exactly who can see what information (Harvey 2010:140).

A Facebook user can control the amount of information that they post as well as who views this information by making use of their privacy settings. A specific group of users (the user’s friends or a network) may therefore be granted limited access to specific parts of the user’s profile (Pempek et al. 2009:230).

2.6.3.3 Email notifications

In order to inform users of any new activity that is taking place email notifications are generally sent out. The users of the SNS, Facebook are enabled to choose exactly what type of activities they want to be notified of. The primary purpose of these notifications is to provide those users who do not visit the site on a regular basis to know when any new activity is taking place that requires action from them. When the notifications for all the features are turned on and the user has a large number of connections, the amount of emails that they will receive can be potential be very large. Although this feature can result in information overload it is normally easy to turn the notifications off (Harvey 2010:140).

2.6.3.4 Extensions

Nowadays numerous social networking sites allow users to organise their list of available features. Some of these sites are also increasing the default features of
social networking sites to include a more extensive assortment of Web 2.0 technologies (Harvey 2010:140). The inclusion of blogs on some social networking sites enables users to provide more comprehensive information about what they are thinking or have been doing and to gather feedback on these blogs. Wikis enable the groups who have been created to work collaboratively on a document with limited difficulty. These additional features all enhance the social networking sites and contribute to the communication opportunities that they provide (Harvey 2010:141).

2.7 USE OF FACEBOOK BY HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS (HEIs) AND ITS STUDENTS

A HEI can make use of the profile function, by creating a profile for the institution that is utilised to make users and stakeholders aware of the institution and what it offer as well as to upload content to market and advertise the institution to interested individuals. The NMMU’s Facebook profile enable the students who ‘like’ the page as well as their other fans to obtain information about the institution as illustrated in Figure 2.5.

Figure 2.5: NMMU's Facebook profile

Source: NMMU Facebook (2011).
A Facebook profile mainly contains information chosen by the individual or an institution that created the profile, which they want to share within the site. The profile feature includes information that an individual can choose to share such as their email address, address, contact numbers and home town. Furthermore, individuals can provide information on their profile with regards to where they attended or are attending a school or university, where they are employed, what their personal interests are as well as more trivial information about themselves such as their favourite music and movies (Timm & Duven 2008:92). HEIs can therefore utilise the ‘profile’ feature on their Facebook page as a way of informing its students about who they are, what they stand for and also various aspects of the institution, such as where it is situated and contact details of the various departments. This is illustrated by Figure 2.6 where NMMU has placed an ‘About Us’ section on their Facebook page. A Faceook page also provides institutions with useful information as to how many individuals ‘like’ their page and also who is currently talking about the institution and its page at any given point in time (left hand column of Figure 2.6).

**Figure 2.6: NMMU Facebook page – ‘About Us’**
Facebook is and can be utilised by HEIs and its students to obtain information about the activities of friends, social information about peers as well as information on social events taking place. When these types of information are placed on Facebook, it is being broadcasted to the user’s entire network (Quan-Haase & Young 2010:358). HEIs can therefore use Facebook as a medium of sharing information about events taking place at the institution by making use of the events feature offered by Facebook. Facebook focus on sharing and supporting the exchange of short messages, which is done by individuals or businesses such as HEIs via the public wall (wall feature) on Facebook (Quan-Haase & Young 2010:359). HEIs can post and share information by updating its status on the Facebook page. Universities can furthermore utilise the ‘wall’ feature on their Facebook page, which is another means of notifying its students of events taking place within the university (White, Plotnick, Kushma, Hiltz & Turoff 2009), such as notifying students of events, crime, emergencies or important notices. An example of how a university can utilise the ‘wall’ feature to advertise activities taking place at their institution can be seen through the post made by NMMU about The Collective Graduate Fashion Show held at the university (Figure 2.7) and this event will be seen by the individuals who ‘like’ the NMMU page as well as by their friends and networks.

Figure 2.7: Event being advertised on the NMMU Facebook page
Another feature that Facebook offer HEIs is that instead of having a personal profile, HEIs can create a ‘group’ that provide them with a ‘group wall’. The reason for groups being effectively used by HEI to convey information is due to groups enabling people who have similar interest to come together and share information on any topic. The ‘group’ feature on Facebook will facilitate for example HEI to share photo threads, engage in discussions and provide numerous ways to communicate with their target audiences (White et al. 2009).

When HEIs create a Facebook page for their institution, it creates the opportunity for them to increase their visibility on the Internet as the page allows them to be visible in search engine results, which results in increased traffic to the Facebook page. The Facebook pages of HEIs or businesses does not allow the institution or business to send private messages to their fans (individuals who ‘like’ their page), but rather allow them to post updates that will be shown as notifications on the fans’ profile pages (Parker 2011:94). A more valuable aspect of having a Facebook page is that the fans’ interactions with the HEIs’ or businesses’ pages will be displayed in their friends’ news feeds as well. This presence of the institution or business in the news feeds of friends’ profiles, leads to the brand being promoted by the people who ‘like’ the institution’s or business’s page on the site (Parker 2011:95).
An advantage that Facebook pages hold for HEIs is that the page enables them to upload detailed information about their institution or business as well as import other content into the page, such as a blog or Twitter feed. Another benefit for HEIs when creating a Facebook page for themselves is that their pages is linked to Facebook Insights, which enables the institution to have access to statistics about its students’ interactions with the brand and the page. Having access to these statistics will make it easier to track the success of the institution’s promotional efforts on Facebook (Parker 2011:94).

To raise interest with people who ‘like’ their Facebook page, HEIs can make use of the events feature on Facebook, which enable them to create an event on Facebook that is related to the business or institution such as exhibitions, academic events or sporting events taking place (Parker 2011:98). The fans then have the opportunity to RSVP to the events by indicating that they are attending, that they are not attending or that they are maybe attending. The response to the event will then be indicated in the person’s news feed and be placed in their calendar (Parker 2011:98).

A feature that HEIs and businesses can utilise to assist in promoting their brand to its current and prospective customers is the photos and videos feature. Facebook allow a HEI to upload photos and videos to the site in order to promote and advertise its brand. Furthermore, it also allows people who ‘like’ the page to upload photos and videos about the institution, which assist in promoting the brand. The number of photos and videos that can be uploaded is not limited by Facebook (Parker 2011:99). A HEI may use the photo feature on Facebook to upload photos about the institution in general, its buildings, staff members and students as well as of activities taking place at the institution. These photos can assist in marketing and improving the Brand image of the institution such as seen by the wall photos, profile photos and photo albums uploaded by NMMU in Figure 2.8.

*Figure 2.8: Photos on the NMMU Facebook page*
Research on the usage patterns of Facebook users indicated that the users primarily adopted and use the SNS to maintain contact with their offline connections instead of focusing on developing new relationships (Ellison et al. 2006; Lampe, Ellison & Steinfield 2006). Findings from Lampe et al. (2006) indicated that students of HEIs utilise Facebook for the purpose of ‘social searching’, in order to learn more about an individual that they know offline, instead of ‘social browsing’, which is where students use Facebook to develop new connections with other individuals. The students, as respondents to the study, indicated that they make use of Facebook to ‘keep in touch’ with an old friend or someone that they know from high school (Lampe et al. 2006:168; Quan-Haase & Young 2010:352).

A study conducted by Ellison et al. (2007) yielded similar results by indicating that university students make use of Facebook for keeping in touch with people who are attending their modules and classes (known as maintaining social capital), as well as for maintaining pre-existing close relationships (known as bonding social capital). In maintaining pre-existing relationships, Facebook assist in providing a low-maintenance method for its users to keep up-to-date on the activities that their friends are engaging in as well as being notified of their friends’ birthdays, which is an example of a Facebook feature that requires minimal efforts to keep in contact with their friends (Quan-Haase & Young 2010:352).
Eighty-five percent of the respondents to Quan-Haase and Young’s (2010:355) study indicated that their primary motivation for joining the SNS, Facebook, is that it is suggested by a friend. Therefore, it is important to note that friendship networks plays a vital role in the adoption of Facebook as SNS has been considered as the primary purpose of social connectivity (Quan-Haase & Young 2010:355). HEIs should therefore focus on instilling a positive view with its students who ‘like’ their Facebook page, which will lead to these students suggesting to their friends to ‘like’ the Facebook page of the HEI.

Another motivating factor that the respondents (49%) of Quan-Haase and Young’s (2010:355) study indicated as to why they join Facebook, is that they perceive Facebook as having a high degree of popularity amongst their peers and therefore the adoption of Facebook is a result of the need of students to be fashionable as well as to keep in touch with others and to find people who shares classes or modules with them. This fashionability relates to being part of their peer group and to a larger societal trend. These activities highlights and reflects students’ need for social connectivity, which is met through the use of Facebook and that allows its users to stay loosely connected with their friends and family as well as to be part of the larger Facebook community. Students consider their non-acceptance and non-usage of Facebook as meaning that they would be excluded from this network of friendship connections (Quan-Haase & Young 2010:355). HEIs must develop their Facebook pages into ones that offer its students information that will make them popular and appealing with their network of connections as well as to ensure that they remain connected with their current and past students.

Currently (2011), students are making use of online social networking sites to keep in contact with their friends on a daily basis, which is greatly different from the person-to-person contact that took preference about a decade ago. Students are now communicating with one another through social networking sites, such as Facebook and these students are of the opinion that HEI professionals are familiar with these sites. Due to this reason, it is important for the professionals within HEIs who are responsible for student affairs to be familiar with these sites in an attempt to effectively make contact with its students. The HEI professionals have the responsibility to focus on understanding the uses of the technology as well as the
issues surrounding the privacy of the students and how it relates to student rights (Timm & Duven 2008:100).

2.8 SUMMARY

The main purpose of this chapter was to obtain an insight into what social media and social networking sites are and how they are being used as well as acquiring appropriate definitions for these concepts. Therefore, the structure and evolution of the Internet as well as the nature and importance of social networking sites were presented. The nature and importance of social networking sites where discussed and emphasis was placed on defining a social network, the impact it has, the growth and popularity thereof, the types of social networking sites, the conversation prism, the classification of social network users as well as the recommendations for the successful use of social media. Furthermore, the chapter investigated the use of social media by HEIs and provided information on the use of social media as a marketing and communication tool as well as the concerns that HEIs face when utilising social media. Certain ethical and legal considerations need to be adhered to when using social media marketing and these where offered within the chapter. The advantages and disadvantages of social media usage were also mentioned. The chapter was concluded by introducing the social networking sites that will be used to accomplish the purpose of the study, namely Facebook. The various features and dimensions of Facebook were presented.

Chapter 3 will commence with the discussion and contextualising of branding, Brand identity and Brand image. The five core Brand identity variables identified for the study will be discussed by highlighting the important attributes and the influence that they have on the Brand image of a HEI.
CHAPTER 3

BRAND IMAGE, BRAND IDENTITY AND THE BRAND IDENTITY VARIABLES

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The focus of this study is on the impact that various branding variables have on the Brand identity and Brand image of a Higher Education Institution (HEI) through the use of social media. Chapter 2 has discussed the growth and popularity of social media as well as the effective use of social media by Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and the advantages and disadvantages that it entails. Furthermore, Chapter 2 provided a thorough description of Facebook and its various features as this is the social networking site (SNS) that the researcher will use to conduct the study and obtain the statistical data. Chapter 3 will introduce the nature of branding and the
related branding concepts, the five Brand identity variables as well as the impact that they have on Brand image.

The nature and importance of branding in general, as well as its role in HEIs is described. The five core Brand identity variables and their relevant attributes, including their influence on the Brand image of a HEI is presented.

3.2 BRANDS AND BRANDING

In the section to follow the concept of a brand will be defined as well as a discussion on the various meanings and characteristics of a brand will follow. Furthermore, emphasis will be placed on branding and its role on the Internet as well as social media and branding.

3.2.1 DEFINING A BRAND

A brand can be defined as the name that is associated with one, or more than one of the items in a product line, which is used to identify the source of character of the item or items (Han 2006:49; Kotler 2000:396). Furthermore, a brand can also be defined as a contract that is inherent in nature and that manage the relationships amongst a given organisation and their customers (Han 2006:50).

A brand therefore signals the source of the product or service to its customers and protects its customers and producers from competitors that will attempt to provide products that appear to be similar or identical its brand (Ghodeswar 2008:4).

A brand can furthermore be defined as the name, term, symbol, or design or a combination of these elements, which is intended to identify the goods and services of one seller or a group of sellers as well as to differentiate the brand from their competitors (Kotler 2003:418; Kotler, Armstrong & Tait 2010:242; Shimp 2010:34). A brand is regarded as a complex symbol that conveys up to six levels of meaning, namely:
Attributes: A brand has been considered as bringing certain attributes to the mind of the consumer.

Benefits: The attributes of the brand should be translated into emotional and functional benefits.

Values: The brand also reflects things about the producer’s values.

Culture: The brand might reflect a particular culture.

Personality: The brand has been regarded as being able to reflect a certain personality.

User: The brand suggests the type of customers who purchase or uses the product (Kotler 2003:419).

Brands are well-liked by customers, because brands offer customers with a choice, it assists in simplifying purchase decisions, provides quality assurance and reduce risk in the purchasing decision. Furthermore, brands also facilitate customers in expressing themselves as well as offer friendship and pleasure. Brands can therefore be regarded as providing customers with trust (Kathman 2002:25).

Another characteristic of brands is that it provides customers with a basis upon which they can identify and bond with a particular product or service or groups of products or services. When considering the definition of a brand from a customer’s point of view, a brand can be defined as the total accumulation of all the customer’s experiences with the brand, which is built at all points of contact with the customer. A brand that is successful is seen as an identifiable product, service, person or place that is improved in such a way that the customer, user or buyer perceives relevant and unique added values that meets their needs most closely. (Ghodeswar 2008:4).

A branded item or product may be a service, a store, a physical good, an organisation or an idea (Han 2006:50). Kapferer (2004:11) states that a ‘brand is a name that influences buyers’. From the definitions given for a brand it is important to note that these definitions capture the real meaning of a brand, as a name which has the power to influence buyers, or as in the case of this study the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU) where buyers refers to the users of an educational service (Han 2006:50; Kapferer 2004:11).
Kapferer (2004:12) states that a ‘brand exists when it has acquired the power to influence the market’. The product or the service, together with the people at points of contact with the price, the market, the places and the communication makes up the sources of cumulative brand experience. This brand experience is what makes a name acquire the power of a brand. The brand system can therefore be seen as a living system that comprise of three poles, namely the products or services, brand name and symbols as well as concepts (Kapferer 2004:12) as depicted in Figure 3.1.

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**Figure 3.1: The brand system**
When talking about brands, reference is sometimes made to a single aspect of the brand like the name or the logo. However, when considering brand management it refers to the whole system, describing a concept with inherent value to products and services that are identified by and a set of proprietary signs and a name. The proprietary signs include the logo and other symbols. The brand system reflects the conditional nature of the brand asset that states that a brand only exists if the products and the services also exist. Differentiation is therefore summarised by the brand concept and a unique set of attributes that are both tangible and intangible that constitute the value proposition of the brand (Kapferer 2004:12).

Although numerous definitions are available for the term brand, when considering a brand in the context of a HEI the following definition of Stagno (2010:14) is sufficient for this study. A university’s brand is a demonstration of the institution’s features that sets them apart from others, reflect its ability to satisfy students’ needs, stimulate trust in its ability to deliver a particular type and level of Higher Education, and assist potential recruits to make sensible enrolment decisions. A brand is based on relational and emotional aspects that create an image of an institution, where an image can be seen as a persons’ perception of a brand. As a result of increased competition a need has emerged to focus on branding HEIs in order to make HEIs more relevant and distinctive. When building a brand the focus is on fundamental issues such as culture, identity and mission. In order to communicate a unified brand a HEI is required to communicate and work together across all divisions (Stagno 2010:4).

From the above definitions and interpretations a number of important prerequisites for establishing a successful brand are given and can be summarised as follows (Barwise and Meehan 2010:83, Han 2006:51; Melewar & Walker 2003:168):

- Brands ought to be linked to the business strategy.
- Brands ought to reveal a shorthand summary of the business.
- Brands ought to be continuously manifested through the marketing mix.
Brands ought to be consistently positioned across markets.
Brands ought to convey value that must be expressed in customer terms and through delivering what they promise businesses can build trust.
Brands ought to represent an ongoing relationship amongst the business and the brand’s users.
Good brands ought to provide a platform for differentiation and innovation. Businesses focus on seeking further advantage over other businesses by innovating beyond the familiar.
Businesses should offer and communicate a customer promise that is clear and relevant.
These exceptional businesses steer the market by continually improving their promise.
A HEI like the NNMU must have an understanding of its micro market and macro business environments. Another equally important aspect is that HEIs have to consider issues like competitive forces, cultural dynamics and national identity.

### 3.3 THE INTERNET, SOCIAL MEDIA AND BRANDING

During this section emphasis will be place on the way in which the Internet has changed the marketing efforts of businesses and what the Internet offer for marketing communicators. Furthermore, the Internet has allowed for the development of the social web that led to the introduction of social media that holds various opportunities for businesses to effectively market their businesses on the Internet by engaging, interacting and sharing information with their current and prospective customers.

### 3.3.1 THE INTERNET AND BRANDING

The Internet has overturned the way in which customers interact with brands. The introduction of the Internet is bringing a change to the economics of marketing and it result in numerous traditional strategies and structures’ functions becoming obsolete (Edelman 2010:64). Marketing communicators and individuals are entering a new era of marketing, which is frequently characterised as being the new marketplace. This new marketplace comprise of a new economy of brands, which is traded on the
Internet as well as legacy brands from the old economy, which is undergoing transformation at a rapid pace. Some have suggested that branding is under assault in the new marketplace, but the role of branding can be regarded as being more vital than ever, due to the fact that it is critical to ensure that brands in the new marketplace prosper (Kathman 2002:24).

In the past, before the advent and the increasing use of the Internet, customers who wish to purchase a motor vehicle for example would have carefully pared down all the available choices until they identified the motor vehicle that best meet their needs and criteria. After the customer has made his/her purchasing decisions, the relationship between the buyer and the dealer as well as the relationship between the buyer and manufacturer would typically dissolve after the purchase is completed (Edelman 2010:64). The situation has however changed as customers are nowadays promiscuous in their brand relationships. When customers want to make a purchase decision they connect with numerous brands, by making use of the newly available media channels that is beyond the control of the retailer and manufacturer’s control or sometimes even their knowledge. The connection to the brand enables customers to evaluate a changing range of options and often they expand these pools of available options before narrowing it down to a small number of options (Edelman 2010:64). The change between the past decision-making by customers and the present decision-making is that customers may now remain aggressively engaged with the retailer or manufacturer after the purchase. They remain connected by publically promoting or attacking the product or products that they have bought, challenging and shaping their meaning as well as collaborating in the brands’ development (Edelman 2010:64).

When engaging with a brand, customers still want a clear brand promise and brand offerings that are of value to them. The touch points however changed between the past and the present. Touch points relates to when customers are most open to be influenced and how marketers can interact with the customers at that points. These touch points have changed in both nature and number, which necessitates a major adjustment to realign marketers’ strategies and budgets with where the customers are really spending their time (Edelman 2010:64).
3.3.2 THE THEN AND NOW OF TOUCH POINTS

In order to identify the shift in the touch points and how marketers engage with their customers can be explained by considering the funnel metaphor, which explains the touch points of the past and how it was utilised by marketers. Furthermore, the consumer decision journey illustrates the present touch points by indicating how customers are now engaging with brands and how these brands are marketed by marketers. The various touch points identified above will be discussed in the subsections to follow.

3.3.2.1 ‘The funnel metaphor’

For a long period of time, marketers utilised the famous ‘funnel metaphor’ when thinking about touch points. Marketers believed that customers begin their decision-making at the wide end of the funnel, where they have a large number of brands in mind and then carefully narrowed these brands down to a final choice of purchase. This process is illustrated in Figure 3.2.

With the belief that most customers engage in this form of decision-making many businesses made use of traditional paid-media push marketing at well-identified points along the funnel with the aim of building awareness and drive consideration with the ultimate outcome being able to inspire customers to purchase. A shortcoming of this view is that this metaphor fails to capture the changing nature of customer engagement. (Edelman 2010:64).

Figure 3.2: The funnel metaphor
Various labels are given to each stage of the funnel metaphor by different researchers. Another labelling system of Jansen and Schuster (2011:2) indicate that when customers engage with a brand or have to make a purchase decision they go through four stages, namely awareness, research, decision and purchase. The general idea of the buying funnel is that this is a model as to how markets can reach their customers. Within the buying funnel, customers pass through a series of stages from being aware of the product, then engaging in research to identify alternatives, then making their decision and finally making the purchase (Jansen & Schuster 2011:2).

It has been noted that the buying funnel links in with the concept of decision making as the awareness of the brand aligns with intelligence, while the research and decision links in with the design and whereas the purchase aligns with the choice made by the customer. This notion indicates that there is psychological foundational support for this buying funnel (Jansen & Schuster 2011:2).
Figure 3.3 indicates the buying funnel model used by Jansen and Schuster (2011) for the purpose of their study. Figure 3.3 indicates the four stages through which the customer goes, namely awareness, research, decision and purchase.

**Figure 3.3: The buying funnel**

A new, more nuanced view of how customers now engage with brands have been introduced in 2009, by David Court and three co-authors in the June edition of the McKinsey Quarterly namely ‘the customer decision journey’. Their findings revealed that customers now take a much more iterative and less reductive journey of the four
stages illustrated in Figure 3.2 and are no longer systematically narrowing down their choices. The four stages of decision-making include consider; evaluate; buy; and enjoy, advocate and bond (Edelman 2010:65).

3.3.2.2.1 Consider

The decision-making journey starts off with the customer’s top-of-mind consideration set. This consideration set comprise of all those brands and products that customers have been exposed to through advertisements, in-store displays, encounters with the product or brand at a friend’s house or other forms of stimuli. With the traditional funnel method, the first consideration stage contained the largest number of brands. However, with customers currently being assaulted by media and flooded with a large number of choices, they now reduce the number of brands that they consider from the outset of the decision-making process (Edelman 2010:65).

3.3.2.2 Evaluate

The consideration set that customers start off with initially gets expanded as customers try to find input from reviewers, peers, retailers, the brand and its competitors. Frequently, the customers will eliminate some of the original brands and products in their consideration set and add new brands as they become more familiar with the brands and their decision criteria shift. The customers’ interaction and outreach to other sources and marketers will have a greater impact on their subsequent choices than marketers’ push to persuade their choices (Edelman 2010:65).

3.3.2.2.3 Buy

Often customers delay their purchasing decisions until they are in the store and many customers may be easily dissuaded at that point. The point of purchase is a very influential touch point as it exploits the packaging, placement, pricing, availability and sales interactions (Edelman 2010:65).
3.3.2.2.4 Enjoy, advocate and bond

A deeper connection gets established after the purchase has been made as the customers interact with the products as well as with the new online touch points. If or when the customer is pleased with the purchase decision that they made, they will promote the brand or product by way of word-of-mouth, create information that other evaluators can use as well as strengthen a brand’s potential. However, when a customer is dissatisfied by their purchase, they may wish to break ties with the brand or sometimes even worse (Edelman 2010:65), spread negative information about the brand. When the bond between the customer and brand becomes strong enough, they will enter the ‘the loyalty loop’ as illustrated in Figure 3.4, which involves the stages of enjoy, advocate and buy that skips the consider and evaluation stages (Edelman 2010:65).

Figure 3.4: The consumer decision journey
Figure 3.4 illustrates the introduction of the new process through which customers go when making purchasing decisions, namely ‘the consumer decision journey’. During this process customers make their decisions in a shorter space of time and with fewer brand or product elimination stages by considering all the available options, evaluating the alternatives and then purchasing the brand or product.

### 3.3.3 SOCIAL MEDIA AND BRANDING

Some experts believe that marketing as we know it is ending due to the rise and growth of social media and the shift of power to the customer. This is however not the case as the introduction of social media, now more than ever, make it more urgent for companies, organisations and institutions to get the basics right by developing and delivering a reliable and compelling brand promise (Barwise & Meehan 2010:80).

It has at all times been dangerous for businesses to disappoint customers over the long term; however, nowadays the extent and speed of social media can result in the failure of satisfying customers being instantaneously painful. An obvious threat
when using social media for branding is the failure to keep up with the pace of social media developments. A not so obvious danger of social media usage is businesses who get sidetracked by social media developments, which results in them losing sight of the fundamentals of marketing (Barwise & Meehan 2010:80). Social media and social networks offers its users with an avenue where they can voice their annoyance and frustration with a brand and businesses and therefore it should be closely monitored by a business’s marketing communicators in order to gauge sentiment (Stokes 2008:134).

The social web (Web 2.0) created and developed new opportunities and possibilities for content building as well as assisted in greatly increasing the sharing and participation amongst web users, which addresses the primary concept of socially shared meaning. This concept is central and significant to the whole aspect of the social web as this is where broadcasting has now been replaced by participation, collaboration and exchange, also recently known as ‘socialcasting’ (Jones, Temperley & Lima 2009:931). It is due to this reason and these new circumstances and developments of the Internet that businesses now have to adapt and rethink their online reputations and brand management practices together with their marketing communication strategies (Jones, Temperley & Lima 2009:931) in order to ensure the effective branding of their business.

The social web therefore provide communities, known as people who share the same interests, enthusiasm for, and the sharing of knowledge about their specific consumption activities, with opportunities as well as new methods to express their voices as well as have their opinions and views heard by others. Due to these abilities that the social web offers, social media, which is marked by user-generated content is a vital element of the communication offering mix of a business (Jones et al. 2009:931).

Most businesses make use of social media as tools for collaboration and engagement with their customers. In order to tap into participants’ expertise and creativity for product development many marketers at leading businesses have created dynamic exchanges with and amongst their customers on social media sites such as Beinggirl.com (Procter & Gamble), Fiesta Movement (Ford), OPEN Forum
(American Express) and myPlanNet (Cisco). Marketers can utilise social networks to determine and identify how the users of their products are interacting with and perceiving their brand, which will facilitate in opening up new avenues of communicating with their customers (Stokes 2008:134). The use of social media also hold a number of benefits for businesses as it can assist in boosting brand awareness, trail and ultimately the sales of the company, particularly when the campaign goes viral. More importantly is that social media can assist businesses to gain rich, unmediated customer insights at a faster rate than was previously possible (Barwise & Meehan 2010:82).

The use of social media by businesses and the benefits that these sites offer represents a profound shift in the focus of marketers as market research is now customer-centric and no longer product-centric. In the past marketers asked customers questions relating to the behaviours and attitudes of their brands. There has recently been an increase in ethnographic research that assists marketers in finding out and understanding how a brand and its wider product category fit into people’s everyday lives. Social media simplify this form of research as social networks provide new powerful ways to explore customers’ lives and opinions. The primary reason why social networking sites are successful is because participants find the site authentic, are engaged with the brands and trust one another (Barwise & Meehan 2010:82).

Although a business’s decision on how to and whether to use new tools is determined by a particular situation, it is important that all businesses incorporate social media into their marketing mix (Barwise & Meehan 2010:83).

This section provided important information on how social media has impacted the branding and marketing of marketing communicators. With the primary purpose of this study being the determination of the impact that social media has on the Brand image of a HEI, it can be highlighted that this section therefore provides insight into how HEIs can utilise social media to market their institution.

3.4 COMPARISON BETWEEN PRODUCT AND CORPORATE BRANDS
One of the changes that businesses are making when moving towards globalisation is that they shift their marketing emphasis from product branding to corporate branding. This shift can be attributed to the difficulties that businesses experience in maintaining their credible product differentiation in the face of many products and services being imitated as well as the fragmentation of traditional marketing segments. This fragmentation is taking place due to customers becoming more sophisticated and the markets more complex. Due to this situation businesses should no longer base their differentiation strategies on markets or preferential product ranges, or the positioning of products but rather by positioning the whole corporation (Hatch & Schultz 2001:1041).

Corporate brands have been found to increase a company’s recognition, visibility and reputation in ways that is not fully appreciated by the product branding concept. Not only does the corporate brand contribute to the image that customers hold about the organisation, but also the image formed and held by all the stakeholders of the organisation (Hatch & Schultz 2001:1042).

With the contemporary brand management orientation, it is possible to differentiate between the concepts ‘product brands’ and ‘corporate brands’. A product brand can be defined as the name, term, symbol, design or a combination of these elements, which assists in identifying the products of a firm as well as to differentiate the firm from their competitors and what they offer (Boone & Kurtz 1996:390; Han 2006:52; Kotler et al. 2010:242; Schoell, Dessler & Reinecke 1993:408).

A corporate brand can be considered as the brand that defines an organisation, which will deliver and support the offerings of the organisation. Therefore, the corporate brand is defined mainly by organisational associations (Aaker 2004:7). These organisational associations may however be related to product brands, but the number, power and credibility of the organisational associations will be better for a brand that visibly represents a corporate organisation. A corporate brand will potentially have assets and capabilities, a rich heritage, values and priorities, people, a national and international frame of reference, citizenship programmes and a performance record (Aaker 2004:7). Corporate brands can also be considered as an informal contract, due to the fact that the business needs to communicate its accord
with their key stakeholders by continuously demonstrating over time that they have kept true to their corporate branding pledge (Han 2006:52).

Dahlén, Lange and Smith (2010:210) mentions that a corporate brand is the culmination of the many emotional feelings and experiences which seller, investors, stakeholders, employees, customers and communities have when they engage with the product, service, processes and company culture occur. Businesses should therefore focus on creating, managing and fulfilling expectations among several stakeholders as projection of a clear, consistent brand message is vital to the successful delivery of the brand promise (Dahlén et al. 2010:210).

Corporate brands can be seen as differing from product brands with regards to several aspects (Hatch & Schultz 2001:1044), which are summarised in Table 3.1 below.

### Table 3.1: A comparison between product and corporate brands

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimensions</th>
<th>Product brands</th>
<th>Corporate brands</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Focus attention on</td>
<td>The product</td>
<td>The organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Values</td>
<td>Mainly artificial</td>
<td>Authentic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management</td>
<td>Middle manager</td>
<td>Chief executive officer (CEO)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attracts the attention and gain the support of</td>
<td>Customers</td>
<td>Multiple stakeholders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Functional responsibility (Message delivered by)</td>
<td>Marketing</td>
<td>Whole organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication mix</td>
<td>Marketing communication</td>
<td>Total corporate communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand development</td>
<td>Short product life cycle</td>
<td>Long (relates to the life of the organisation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Importance to company</td>
<td>Functional</td>
<td>Strategic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment</td>
<td>Customer/consumer commitment</td>
<td>Stakeholder commitment (internal and external)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3.1 illustrates that the focus of branding efforts moves from the product brand to the corporate brand when the functional responsibility rests on the whole business. Numerous businesses that traditionally based their success on product brands, now adopts a corporate brand in an attempt to make business missions, values and actions more significant. In addition to this adoption, being able to achieve the above-mentioned outcomes can further also diffuse specific added values (Han 2006:53).

Therefore, this study about the Brand image and Brand identity of the NMMU will focus on the corporate brand. In contrast to product brands that prosper on the commitment of customers only, it is vital for the NMMU corporate brand to have stakeholder commitment from both internal and external constituencies in order to be well-established. The staff members of the NMMU needs to have a thorough understanding of the mission and vision of the NMMU brand and be strongly committed to delivering it as this will assist in shaping the NMMU brand. Therefore it is important that the NMMU needs to pay attention to their ethos, core values and culture as these facets encompass the assumptions and values of staff that affect their behaviour and ultimately influence the stakeholders’ perceptions (Han 2006:55).

3.5 BRAND EQUITY

Throughout this section the concept of brand equity will be defined as well as brand equity from a customer-based and firm-based perspective will be briefly discussed. Guidelines on how to enhance brand equity, the benefits derived from enhancing brand equity as well as managing brand equity will also be discussed.

3.5.1 DEFINING BRAND EQUITY
The concept of brand equity has been studied from a variety of perspectives and different authors such as Aaker (1991), Farquhar (1989), and Srivastava and Shocker (1991). Brand equity can therefore be defined in terms of the marketing effects that are distinctively attributable to the brand. These marketing effects include the occurrence of certain outcomes that is the result of the marketing of a product or services, due to its brand name, which would not have occurred if the product or service did not have a brand name (Keller 1993:1). Kotler et al. (2010:247) defines brand equity as the positive differential effect that knowing the brand name has on the response of customers to the business’s service or product.

Closely related to the above-mentioned definition of brand equity, Leuthesser (1988) cited in Wood (2000:662) broadly defines brand equity as the set of associations and behaviours of the brand’s customers, channel members or parent corporations that enables the brand to earn greater margins or volumes than would be possible if they did not have a brand name.

The concept of brand equity can be viewed from two perspectives, namely from the perspective of an organisation that owns the brand or from the perspective of the customer (Shimp 2010:34). Considering brand equity from the perspective of an organisation, the focus is on the outcomes resulting from the efforts to enhance a brand’s value to its various stakeholders (Shimp 2010:35). Brand equity can be seen as encompassing a set of assets or liabilities that are associated with the brand’s symbol and name, which is highlighted as adding to or subtracting from the value that the product or service provide a firm and/or its customers with (Aaker 1996:109; Han 2006:67). A variety of benefits or positive outcomes can be identified as the product of the value or equity of a brand increase. These benefits include the achievement of a higher market share, increased loyalty to the brand, the ability to charge premium prices and the ability to earn a price premium (Shimp 2010:35). Some implications can also be identified such as strong brands often provide the opportunity for successful brand extensions as well as for brand licensing. Furthermore, strong brands are able to stabilise as well as produce profits throughout periods of recession (Aaker 1996:109; Han 2006:67).

Conceptualising brand equity from a customer’s perspective highlights two important points. Firstly, marketers should broadly view the marketing activities for a brand in
order to identify the effects that these activities have on the brand knowledge and how these changes in the brand knowledge affects the traditional marketing outcomes like sales. Secondly, it is important for marketers to understand that a brand’s long-term success of its future marketing programmes is significantly affected by the knowledge about the brand in the memory of the customers, which has been established by the organisation’s short-term marketing efforts (Keller 1993:2).

When considering brand equity from a customer’s perspective, brands can be seen as possessing equity to the extent that customers or consumers are familiar with the brand as well as this brand being stored in the memory of the customers as being strong, favourable and possessing unique brand associations (Shimp 2010:36-37). From a customer-based perspective, brand equity can be viewed as brand assets that is associated with a brand’s symbol and name, which contribute to, or subtract from a product or service (Aaker & Joachimsthaler 2000:17; Han 2006:67).

3.5.2 ENHANCING BRAND EQUITY

Generally the efforts to enhance a brand’s equity are achieved through the initial choice of positive Brand identity, by choosing an appropriate and good brand name and logo. The enhancement of brand equity is however mostly achieved through marketing and marketing communication programmes that build a strong, favourable and unique association with the brand in the minds of the customers or consumers (Shimp 2010:41; Underwood, Bond & Baer 2001:4).

Shimp (2010:42) identifies three approaches in which brand equity can be enhanced, namely the speak-for-itself approach, the Message-driven approach (creating appealing messages) and the leveraging approach.

The speak-for-itself approach can be defined as the process through which customers or consumers try and use the brands where they then learn whether the brand is good or bad as well as what benefits the brands are possible to deliver and which ones they cannot deliver (Shimp 2010:42).
The *message-driven approach* (creating appealing messages) is about creating or attempting to create beneficial associations through the continuous communication and claims about the features that their brands possess as well as the benefits that the brands deliver. Brand equity can be enhanced if marketing communicators ensure that their messages are able to grab attention, creative, memorable and believable (Shimp 2010:42).

The *leveraging approach* assists in establishing brand associations and enhancing brand equity by leveraging positive associations that is already contained in the world of places, people and things already available to customers or consumers. When people socialise they have the ability to form beliefs, learn cultural values as well as become familiar with the physical manifestations or artefacts of these values and beliefs (Shimp 2010:42-43).

### 3.5.3 BENEFITS OF ENHANCING BRAND EQUITY

The primary benefits that result from enhancing the brand equity of brands is that the brand loyalty of customers and consumers may also increase. Long-term growth and profitability of an organisation have been identified as largely being dependent on creating and reinforcing brand loyalty. (Shimp 2010:46).

It has also been noted that when organisations communicate messages that are positive and unique by utilising personal selling, advertising, promotions, events as well as other methods these organisations are able to effectively differentiate their brand from what their competitors offer as well as protect themselves from future price competition (Shimp 2010:46). Therefore, marketing communications play a vital role in establishing positive brand equity as well as build strong brand loyalty (Shimp 2010:46).

### 3.5.4 MANAGING BRAND EQUITY
Brand equity has previously been defined as a set of brand assets and liabilities associated with a brand’s symbol and name, which contribute to, or subtract from a product or service (Aaker & Joachimsthaler 2000:17; Atilgan, Aksoy & Akinci 2005:238).

According to Atilgan et al. (2005:240) these assets known as brand equity can be grouped into five dimensions, namely brand loyalty, brand awareness, perceived quality, brand associations and other proprietary brand assets as depicted in Figure 3.5. Each one of the five dimensions will be briefly discuss in the following paragraphs.

**Figure 3.5: Managing brand equity**

![Diagram showing the five dimensions of brand equity](image)

**Sources:** Atilgan *et al.* (2005:240); Dahlén *et al.* (2010:208).

3.5.4.1 The five dimensions for managing brand equity
Brand loyalty can be defined according to behavioural, attitudinal and choice perspectives. When considering the choice perspective relating to brand loyalty it focuses on the factors that might influence choices or the reasons for purchases (Atilgan et al. 2005:239). Furthermore, Aaker (1991) cited in Atilgan et al. (2005:240) define brand loyalty as a situation that reveals the likelihood of customers or consumers to switch to another brand, particularly when the business decides to bring changes to the brand, by either changing the product features or the price. Shimp (2010:161) indicates that brand loyalty is a goal that marketing communicators aspire to achieve. It is important for marketers to meet the customers’ needs better than the brands that they are competing with and continue to communicate the brand’s merits in an attempt to reinforce the customer’s brand-related attitudes and beliefs.

Brand awareness is defined by Aaker (1991:61) as potential buyers’ ability to recognise and recall a brand as being a member of a particular product category as well as the ease with which the name is evoked (Shimp 2010:37). When considering the concept brand awareness, it is seen as involving linking the brand such as the brand name, logo and symbol to certain associations in the memory of the customers. (Keller 2001:8).

Perceived quality can be defined as the perception of customers or consumers with regards to the overall quality or superiority of a product or service related to the product or service’s intended purpose relative to their alternatives (Atilgan et al. 2005:240). Dahlén et al. (2010:208) state that the perceived quality affects the association in various situations for a customer and positively affects the business’s profitability.

Brand associations and other proprietary brand assets: Brand associations can be regarded as anything that links the customer to the brand. These aspects include the product attributes, user imagery, use situations, organisational associations, symbols and Brand personality (Han 2006:69).

3.6 BRAND KNOWLEDGE
In order to understand the concepts of Brand image and Brand identity it is important to firstly gain an understanding of the concept brand knowledge. Brand knowledge comprise of two main components, namely brand awareness and Brand image. Brand awareness has been identified as relating to the brand recognition and brand recall by customers. Brand image on the other hand refers to the set of associations connected to the brand that is held in customers’ memories (Keller 1993:2).

3.6.1 DEFINING THE CONCEPT OF BRAND KNOWLEDGE

To understand knowledge about the brand and its relation to brand equity some basic memory principles can be used. It is important to be knowledgeable about the content and structure of brand knowledge as the concepts influence what comes to mind when customers think about a specific brand (Keller 1993:2). The associative network memory model as an example of the memory principles examines the semantic memory of knowledge as comprising of a set of nodes and links. Nodes can be defined as the stored information connected by links that differ in strength (Keller 1993:2).

Consistent with the associative network memory model, brand knowledge can be conceptualised as comprising of a brand node in the memory of the customers to which a number of associations are linked. Therefore, the dimensions that differentiate brand knowledge and affect customer responses are the awareness of the brand (include brand recognition and brand recall) as well as the favourability, the strength and the uniqueness of the brand associations in the minds of the consumers. The characteristics of and the relationships between the brand associations has been seen as affecting these dimensions (Keller 1993:3).

Figure 3.6 illustrates the two main components of brand knowledge, namely brand awareness and Brand image. Furthermore, Figure 3.6 illustrates the various sub-components associated with brand awareness and Brand image.

The basic principle of this brand knowledge model is that the power of a brand lies in what the customers or consumers have seen, heard and felt about the brand based on their experiences with the brand (Han 2006:78; Keller 2003:59)
3.6.2 BRAND AWARENESS

Brand awareness forms the basic dimension of brand knowledge. When considering brand knowledge from the customer’s perspective it can be stated that for a brand to have equity the customer should at least be aware of the brand. Kapferer (1997:137) distinguished between the three types of brand awareness, namely top-of-mind awareness, unaided awareness and aided awareness.

- **Top-of-mind awareness** can be regarded as measuring whether the brand is the first brand to come to the mind of the customer when they are interviewed about the brand of a given category.
- **Unaided brand awareness** measures the impact that the brand has such as to what extent it is spontaneously associated with a particular product category.

- **Aided brand awareness** is about determining whether the target audience have already heard of a particular brand or if they have at least heard about the brands’ names.

As illustrated in Figure 3.6 the two levels that is associated with brand awareness is known as brand recognition and brand recall (Shimp 2010:37). Brand recognition is seen as reflecting a somewhat superficial level of awareness, whereas brand recall indicates a deeper form of awareness. Some customers might be able to identify a brand when they are provided with cues or a list of brands. On the other hand, only a small number of customers will be able to retrieve a brand name from their memory without being provided with any form of cues or hints. The primary aim of marketing communicators is therefore to move a brand from a state of unawareness by customers, to brand recognition, then to brand recall and ultimately to top-of-mind awareness in the mind of their customers (Shimp 2010:38). From this it is evident that the NMMU brand has no equity unless the students are awareness of the brand’s existence.

Brand awareness has been identified as being able to affect customer perceptions as well as customer’s attitudes towards the brand. Different levels of brand awareness exist and distinction can be made between these levels. These levels include brand recognition, spontaneous brand recall, brand dominance, brand knowledge and brand opinion (Aaker 1996:114).

Keller (1993:3) states that brand awareness play a significant role in customer decision-making due to three important reasons (Keller 2003:68), namely:

- **Consideration advantages**: It is important that customers think of the brand when thinking of a particular product category. By raising brand awareness the likelihood of a brand becoming a member of the customers consideration set is also increased. A consideration set can be defined as the handful of brands that receive serious consideration before the customers engage in the purchase (Keller 1993:3).
Choice advantages: The decisions about brands in the consideration set can be affected by brand awareness, even if there are basically no other brand associations (Keller 2003:68). In low involvement decision-making situations, a minimum level of brand awareness are likely to be sufficient when making a decision about a product, even though there may be an absence of a well-established attitude (Keller 1993:3).

Learning advantages: Customer decision-making is affected by brand awareness as it influences the formation and strength of brand associations in the Brand image (Keller 1993:3; Keller 2003:68).

3.6.3 BRAND IMAGE

Research on Brand image focuses on the way in which a particular group of individuals perceived a brand, product, politicians, a country, a company (Kapferer 2004:98) or in the case of this study, the NMMU as a HEI. The Brand image can be viewed as the way in which these groups of individuals interpret all the signals stemming from the products, services and communication covered by the brand (Kapferer 2004:99). Kapferer (2004:99) states that an image can be regarded as a synthesis made by the public of all the various brand messages such as the visual symbols, brand name, advertisements, articles, products, patronage and sponsoring. A Brand image can be viewed as the outcome resulting from the decoding of a message, the extraction of meaning or the interpretation of signs (Kapferer 2004:99).

Argenti and Druckenmiller (2004:369) defines Brand image as the expression of an organisation’s identity and its corporate brand. It is how the organisation is seen from the perspective of one stakeholder. An organisation can have numerous images, depending on which stakeholder is involved. Stakeholders can be customers, consumers, investors or employees. Furthermore, Brand image can be thought of as the types of associations that come to the minds of the customers when considering a particular brand. An association can be defined as the particular feelings or thoughts a customer have about a specific brand (Shimp 2007:37). When organisations can create a differentiated and ownable Brand image, it will assist in building an emotional and rational bridge from customers to the product, service or organisation (Ghodeswar 2008:6).
In marketing, image development has traditionally been discussed at three levels of analysis, namely corporate, retail and product/service. The term brand is commonly used in order to refer to the utilisation of marketing imagery at all three these levels. Distinction can be drawn between identity and imagery when analysing marketing imagery. The elements managed and sent by the brand owner are referred to as the identity, while the image is fundamentally that which is received by the consumer. The consumer is the receiver of the communication stimuli beyond those controlled by the brand owner and therefore identity and image unavoidably differ (Meenaghan & Shipley 1999:329).

The communication of a Brand image to the target market or segment has for a long period been considered as a vital marketing activity. This is due to a well-communicated image being able to assist in establishing a brand’s position, protect a brand from competition, which in turn enhances the brand’s market performance. Brand image relates to understanding what the customers gain from the total set of brand-related activities engaged by the organisation (Nandan 2005:267; Park, Jaworski & MacInnis 1986:135). As illustrated in Figure 3.6 these associations can be conceptualised in terms of the type, favourability, strength and uniqueness of the associations (Shimp 2010:39).

3.6.3.1 Types of brand associations

As highlighted above, brand associations take on a variety of forms. A way that marketers can distinguish between the different types of brand associations is through their level of abstraction (Keller 1993:3). The level of abstraction relates to how much information is subsumed or summarised in the association. Therefore, brand associations can be classified into three main categories, namely attributes, benefits and attitudes (Keller 1993:4; Nandan 2005:267; Shimp 2010:133).

3.6.3.1.1 Attributes
The brand attributes can be identified as the descriptive features that characterise a product or service, and can be specific or abstract (Nandan 2005:267). These are the features that customers think the product or service has as well as what is involved with the product or service’s purchase or consumption (Keller 1993:4).

Attributes can be categorised and distinguished in terms of two ways, namely non-product-related and product-related attributes (Nandan 2005:267; Shimp 2010:133). Non-product-related attributes is defined as the aspects external to the product or service that relates to the product or service’s purchase or consumption. There are four primary types of non-product-related attributes (Figure 3.5), namely the price information; packaging or product appearance information (Shimp 2010:133); user imagery that indicates the type of person who uses the product; and the usage imagery that indicates the types as well as places and situations where the product or service is used or consumed (Keller 1993:4; Nandan 2005:267).

Product-related attributes are defined as those ingredients that are essential for performing the product or service function wanted by customers. Therefore, product-related attributes relate to a service’s requirements or a product’s physical composition. Product-related attributes can be seen as differing in terms of product or service category (Keller 1993:4).

3.6.3.1.2 Benefits

Brand benefits refer to the way in which a brand satisfies the customers’ wants and needs (Shimp 2010:133). Benefits can be regarded as the personal values that customers attach to the product or service attributes, indicating what customers think the product or service is able to do for them (Keller 1993:4). Brand benefits refers to the perceptions of the customers in terms of their needs that are being satisfied (Nandan 2005:267). Brand benefits can be categorised into three different categories according to the underlying motivations they relate to. These three categories are functional benefits, experiential benefits and symbolic benefits (Keller 1993:4; Nandan 2005:267; Shimp 2010:133). Functional benefits relate to and correspond with the product-related attributes and are seen as the more intrinsic advantages of product or service consumption (Keller 1993:4). Experiential benefits
correspond with the product-related attributes and these benefits relate to the feeling that customers experience when using the product or service. Experiential benefits satisfy experiential needs like variety, cognitive stimulation and sensory pleasure (Keller 1993:4; Shimp 2010:134). Compared to functional benefits, the symbolic benefits are the more extrinsic benefits linked to product or service consumption. These benefits correspond with non-product-related attributes and are seen as relating to the underlying needs of customers for personal expression or social approval as well as outer-directed self-esteem. Therefore, customers might value exclusivity, prestige or fashionableability of a particular brand, due to how the product relate to their self-concept (Keller 1993:4). Shimp (2010:134) indicates that symbolic benefits are directed to satisfying customers’ needs and desires for group membership, self-enhancement, altruism, affiliation as well as other abstract needs that is not solved or met by practical product benefits.

3.6.3.1.3 Attitudes

Schiffman and Kanuk (2000:200) defines an attitude as a learned predisposition for an individual to behave in a consistently favourable or unfavourable way with respect to a given object. Brand attitudes are seen as customers’ overall evaluations of the brand (Nandan 2005:267). Brand attitudes form the basis of customer behaviour and are therefore of major importance. A number of different models of brand attitudes have been developed, but one approach has been widely accepted and this approach is based on a multi-attribute formulation, where brand attitudes is a function of the associated brand attributes and brand benefits that are significant for the brand. (Keller 1993:4). Customers’ attitudes are an outcome of the actual experience with a product (Shimp 2010:161).

The expectancy-value model of brand attitudes sees attitudes as a multiplicative function of the important beliefs that a customer has about the product or service that relates to the extent to which customers think the brand has particular attributes or benefits, as well as the evaluative judgement of these beliefs held by the customer, including the belief of how well the brand possesses these attributes or benefits (Keller 1993:4-5).
Therefore, the different types of brand associations that make up the Brand image comprise of the non-product-related and product-related attributes; the brand benefits that includes the functional, experiential and symbolic benefits as well as the overall attitudes with regards to the brand. The brand associations can vary according to their favourability, strength and uniqueness (Keller 1993:5; Romaniuk & Nicholls 2005:181; Shimp 2010:39).

3.6.3.2 Favourability of brand associations

Brand associations have been identified as differing from one another based on the favourability of their evaluations. Therefore, the success of marketers’ marketing programmes is reflected in the development of favourable brand associations. These favourable brand associations relate to how customers believe the brand possess the attributes and benefits needed to satisfy their needs and wants in such a way that a positive overall brand attitude is created (Keller 1993:5).

3.6.3.3 Strength of brand associations

Furthermore, brand associations can also be characterised by the strength of their connection to the brand node. The strength of brand associations depends on how the information enter the customer’s memory, known as encoding, as well as how the information is maintained as part of the Brand image, known as storage. Strength has been identified as being a function of both the quantity and quality of processing the information received during encoding. Quantity relates to how much or often a customer thinks about the information, while quality relates to manner in which the customer thinks about the information (Keller 1993:5).

3.6.3.4 Uniqueness of brand associations

Brand associations have been highlighted as being shared or not being shared with other competing brands. The real meaning of brand positioning is that the brand should have a sustainable competitive advantage or ‘unique selling proposition’ (USP) that provides customers with a convincing reason for purchasing a particular brand. The differences amongst brands may be highlighted implicitly without stating
a competitive point of reference or the differences may be communicated explicitly through the direct comparisons made with competitors. These differences may further also be based on non-product-related or product-related attributes or the functional, experiential or symbolic benefits. The existence of strongly held and favourably evaluated brand associations, which is unique to the brand and that imply superiority over other competing brand is vital to a brand’s success (Keller 1993:5).

Building a trustworthy Brand image is particularly important when the organisational or corporate brand plays a major role in the branding strategy that is adopted by the organisation. The Brand image of the NMMU may be reflected by the perceptions and associations that the students and other stakeholders have about what the NMMU stands for as a provider of educational services to the society at large (Han 2006:4).

When considering the NMMU’s Brand image and bearing in mind the definition of the Brand image, the brand associations and perceptions can be seen as those held by students and other stakeholders (Han 2006:5). The Brand image of an organisation is created by six groups of associations and variables, namely strength, uniqueness, expectations, perceptions, experiences, and evaluations of the brand.

- **Strength**: The strength of a Brand image (brand association) is determined by the magnitude and intricacy of the Brand identity signals that the students and other stakeholders are exposed to, as well as the complexity experienced by the students and other stakeholders when processing the signals (Han 2006:5).
- **Uniqueness**: It is imperative to associate unique, meaningful attributes with the NMMU brand. These associations are important due to the fact that they offer the university with a competitive advantage and ‘reason why’ students and other stakeholders should use it (Han 2006:5). The uniqueness of the NMMU Brand identity should be communicated by the marketing communication managers at the NMMU.
- **Expectations**: Brand expectations are associated to how brand users anticipate the brand to perform. NMMU’s brand expectations are determined by general educational service features and benefits, such as the excellence of educational services and the innovativeness of programme offerings (Han 2006:5).
Perceptions and associations: When considering the Brand image of the NMMU it can be determined that a strong Brand image association would encompass the creation of student and stakeholder perceptions (awareness) that the NMMU supplies tertiary educational services of supreme quality (Han 2006:5).

Experiences: Students’ and stakeholders’ Brand image associations can be created through the direct, actual experiences and contact that they have with the NMMU’s educational service offerings and its brand (Han 2006:6).

Evaluations: Evaluations refers to how the users of the NMMU brand understand and evaluate the NMMU brand and the related marketing information presented by the university. The Brand image evaluation is determined by the expectations, perceptions and, most notably, by the students’ and stakeholders’ experience of the brand in question (Han 2006:6).

3.7 BRAND IDENTITY

In the discussion on Brand identity, a definition will be given as well as the main characteristics of Brand identity and the relationship between Brand identity and positioning. The six facets of Brand identity will also be explained by making reference to the Brand identity prism. Furthermore, this section will look at the Brand identity system and the benefits of Brand identity. The purpose of discussing Brand identity is that it constitutes to being one of the main components of the study. It is the intervening variable that comprise of sub-variables that influences the Brand image of a HEI. This section provides an introduction into the Brand identity concept due to it being one of the main components of the study. The following section therefore forms the basis for the empirical support for the independent, intervening and dependent variables presented in Chapter 4.

3.7.1 DEFINING BRAND IDENTITY

The Brand identity generally focuses on service, user profiles, product attributes, in-store atmosphere as well as the product performance and should assist in establishing a relationship among the customer and the brand by creating a value proposition that involves emotional, purposeful or self-expressive benefits (Coop 2004:55; Ghodeswar 2008:5; Konecnik & Go 2008:179). The extended Brand
identity generally revolves around the Brand identity elements, which are organised into cohesive and meaningful groups that provide brand texture and completeness as well as focusing on the Brand personality, relationship and strong symbol association (the identity of the brand (Ghodeswar 2008:5). Brand identity can also be considered as the verbal and visual appearance of a brand, where identity supports, communicates, articulates, synthesises and visualises the brand (Han 2006:3).

A brand can be seen as being a distinctive identity that differentiates a significant, enduring and credible promise of value that is connected with a product, service or organisation and that is indicative of the source of this promise (Ghodeswar 2008:5). Kapferer (2004:96) states that Brand identity is the common element within a business’s marketing activities, which sends out a single message amongst the wide variety of its products, actions and communications. This is important, because the more a brand expands and diversifies, the more its customers are inclined to feel that they are engaging with several different brands, rather than only a single brand (Kapferer 2004:96).

When considering the corporate identity of an entity it can be regarded as assisting an organisation or part of an organisation to feel that it truly exists and that it is coherent and unique, which has a place of its own (building) as well as a rich history that sets them apart from others (Kapferer 2004:96).

Therefore the identity of a brand expresses the tangible and the intangible characteristics of the brand. These characteristics relate to all the things that makes a brand what it is and without these characteristics it will not be what it is. The identity of a brand draws on the roots as well as the heritage of the brand and is those aspects that give the brand its unique legitimacy and authority within the realm of specific values and benefits (Kapferer 2004:102).

When considering the various definitions of Brand identity it can be highlighted that having an identity means being one’s true self and driven by goals, which is both different from others and resistant to change (Kapferer 2004:96). Therefore, in order to be able to clearly define Brand identity the following questions needs to be
answered by businesses (Kapferer 2004:96; Janonis, Dovalienė & Virvilaitė
2007:70), namely:

- What is the particular aim and vision of the brand?
- What makes the brand different?
- What is the need that is fulfilled by the brand?
- What is the brand’s permanent nature?
- What is the value or values of the brand?
- What is the brand’s field of legitimacy or competence?
- What are the signs that make the brand recognisable?

When building the NMMU brand it is of vital importance that clear and comprehensive answers for the above-mentioned questions are provided. The purpose of Brand identity is to specify the brand’s meaning, its aim and self-image. When considering the concept of brand management, Brand identity can be seen as preceding Brand image (Han 2006:73; Kapferer 2004:98).

### 3.7.2 IMPORTANCE OF BRAND IDENTITY

In order to be effective, a brand’s identity needs to resonate with customers, make the brand stand out amongst the competitors by differentiating the brand and be a symbol of what the organisation can and will do over a specific period of time. A key aspect in building a successful brand is that marketers needs to have an understanding of how to develop a Brand identity, by knowing what the brand stands for as well as to effectively express that identity (Ghodeswar 2008:5).

Three goals can be identified as forming part of a clear explanation of the Brand identity concept. The first goal of Brand identity is that it should reduce ambiguity through adding interpretation and detail to the Brand identity elements, which result in making it easier for marketers to define decisions and programmes aimed at strengthening the brand. Secondly, the Brand identity must enhance the ability of decision-makers to assess the capacity of the Brand identity dimensions to resonate with customers and differentiate the brand from its competitors. The third goal of Brand identity is that the elaboration of the identity can introduce ideas and concepts
that are useful and aid in developing on-target and effective brand-building efforts (Aaker & Joachimsthaler 2000:43; Han 2006:73).

A strong Brand identity leads to an increase in brands for consideration as a high Brand identity facilitates customer loyalty and retention, which enables quicker product acceptance by customers (Kathman 2002:31). Businesses that is able to communicate a cohesive, distinctive and relevant Brand identity will be able to create a preference and brand loyalty in the marketplace for their products or services, add value to their products and services as well as have the ability to charge premium prices (Ghodeswar 2008:5).

For marketers, building a brand driven culture can be regarded as a lifelong commitment and requires planning and perseverance, which produces intangible outputs such as reduces price sensitivity, improved customer satisfaction, receiving a greater share of customers income, reduced customer defections, more recommendations as well as a higher percentage of repeat business. Customers place high value on the relationship they have with their brand possessions and with institutions and marketing agents, who owns and manages the brands. Therefore, the Brand identity needs to be focused on its differentiation that provides the firm with a sustainable competitive advantage. Marketers need to apply Brand identity holistically, to ensure that any interaction of customers with the brand will reinforce the Brand image in the mind on the customers as well as to ensure that the brand opportunity is fully exploited. This will ensure that the brand leave a simple, memorable and meaningful visual in the mind of the customers (Williams 2004:350).

Compared to the Brand image that includes the brand’s current associations, Brand identity is inspirational and might imply that the brand’s image needs to be improved or changed. The Brand identity essentially represents what the organisations wants the brand to stand for (Ghodeswar 2008:5).

The position of a brand forms part of the brand’s identity as well as the brand’s value proposition, which needs to be actively communicated to the target audience and demonstrate the advantage that the brand have over its competitors. A well positioned brand possesses a competitively attractive position, which is supported by
strong associations like high ratings on a desirable attribute such as in-store offerings, home delivery or friendly service. A company can establish strong Brand identity or Brand personality for their brand, by strategically positioning a brand in the minds of their customers (target audience) (Ghodeswar 2008:6).

3.7.3 BRAND IDENTITY AND POSITIONING

A brand can be distinguished from its competitors according to its positioning. The concept of positioning a brand means emphasising the distinctive characteristics of the brand, which assists in making the brand different from its competitors as well as appealing to its customers (Kapferer 2004:99). Dahlén et al. (2010:7) highlights that positioning is a concept that is more in the mind of the customer as in the market as it describes the actual and perceived position of the brand in the mind of the customer, in terms of the customers’ expectations and customers’ perceptions of other competing brands.

The positioning of a brand is an important concept in the management of the brand as it is based on the fundamental principle stating that all choices are comparative (Kapferer 2004:102). The positioning of a brand reflects the key features, benefits or image, which it stands for in the mind of the target customers’ collective mind (Shimp 2010:22).

The primary aim of positioning is to identify and possess a strong purchasing rationale that provides the brand with a real or perceived advantage. This entails the brand’s desire to acquire a long-term position in the market as well as to defend this position. Positioning can be regarded as being competition-orientated as the aim is to identify the best way to attack the market shares of its competitors. Identity on the other hand is more stable and long-lasting, because the identity is tied to the roots of the brand and the fixed parameters of the brand (Kapferer 2004:102).

3.7.4 THE FACETS OF THE BRAND IDENTITY PRISM

Brand identity comprise of six facets and therefore serves a greater purpose than just the mere positioning of a brand, which focuses on identifying the market in which
to market the brand and to attack the market and its competitors. In order to accurately position a brand, marketers needs to find answers to the questions, for whom, why, when and against whom the brand will be positioned (Dahlén et al. 2010:128; Kapferer 2004:104).

For brands to become or stay strong they need to be and stay true to their identity. The concept of Brand image is volatile and changing as it focuses too much on the appearance of the brand and not on the essence of the brand. Whereas the concept of Brand identity indicates that managers are willing to look beyond the surface to identify the most intimate substance of the brand. The concept of Brand identity is crucial due to three reasons, namely a brand needs to be durable, the brand needs to send out consistent products and signs and the brand needs to be realistic (Kapferer 2004:106).

The six facets of Brand identity form the brand identity prism (Figure 3.7) and will be discussed in the paragraphs below. These facets of the brand identity prism can be used in order to identify and build the identity of a brand. The six facets of the brand identity prism are the product attributes or the physical facet of the product, the style of behaviour or brand relationship facet, the brand-reflected consumer facet, the Brand personality facet, the brand’s inner values or cultural facet and the consumer mentalisation facet (Martín-Barbero & Sandulli 2006:142-143).

Figure 3.7: Brand identity prism
3.7.4.1 Physique

The physique of a brand comprise of a combination of either the significant objective features of the brand, which is those features of a brand that immediately comes to mind of customers when the brand is quoted or the emerging features. The physique is the backbone of the brand as well as the tangible added value of the brand (Janonis et al. 2007:72; Kapferer 2004:107).

The physique focuses on identifying what the brand is all about, by highlighting what the brand actually does and what the brand looks like. The physique facet therefore includes all the palpable attributes of the brand. It is also sometimes referred to as the outward face of the brand and fundamentally communicates the quality of the brand (Ponnam 2007:65).
When considering the physique of the NMMU, it can be seen as relating to the logo and slogan of the university as this is some of the first aspects of the institution that comes to mind when students or other stakeholders are asked questions about the institution. Furthermore, the physique can also be seen as the physical building (six campuses) and their names that students or other stakeholders think of when faced with a question regarding NMMU.

3.7.4.2 Personality

All brands have a particular personality and through communicating the brand it gradually builds up character. By identifying the way in which the brand communicate or speak about its products or services is an indication of the kind of person the brand would if it was human (Janonis et al. 2007:72; Kapferer 2004:108). Ponnam (2007:65) states that individuals are more likely to be keener towards brands that share the same ideas and beliefs systems as theirs.

The personality of the NMMU is created by the continuous communication of the brand to students and other stakeholders through various marketing media such as social media (Facebook and Twitter), print media, billboards, and magazine and newspaper articles. All of these marketing efforts focus on creating a unique and identifiable personality for the university that people will be able to relate to.

3.7.4.3 Culture

A brand can be viewed as a culture. Culture can be defined along three levels, namely artefacts, values and basic assumption (Ponnam 2007:66). Brands all have their own culture, from which every product originates. The product is not merely a concrete representation of the culture of a brand, but also a means of communication. In terms of the brand identity prism the culture relates to the set of values that feeds the brand’s inspiration and is the source of the brand’s inspirational power. The cultural facet of the brand identity prism refers to the basic principles that govern the brand in its outwards signs, namely the products and communications. This essential cultural aspect is at the core of the brand (Janonis 207:73) (Kapferer 2004:108).
The NMMU must focus on creating a culture that is unique to the university, which relates to the values proposed by the university, namely integrity, taking responsibility, diversity, Ubuntu and excellence. Furthermore, the culture also refers to the way in which students can interact with the NMMU brand and how they can experience the culture, heritage and traditions of the university.

3.7.4.4 Relationship

The Brand relationship can be regarded as being a logical extension of the Brand personality (Ponnam 2007:67). A brand can also be regarded as being a relationship as brands are often at the core of exchanges and transactions amongst people (Janonis et al. 2007:73; Kapferer 2004:109).

The NMMU should place emphasis on developing positive reciprocal relationships with its students and their other stakeholders by creating exchanges and transactions between the university and their stakeholders with regards to education, social and extracurricular activities.

3.7.4.5 Reflection

A brand can furthermore be regarded as a customer reflection (Janonis 2007:73). A brand’s communications and its most prominent products build up over time; a brand will always have a tendency to build a reflection or an image of the user or buyer they focus on addressing and market to. The concept of reflecting the customer is not to describe the target group, but rather a reflection of the customer as they wish to be seen as a result of using the particular brand (Kapferer 2004:110; Ponnam 2007:6869).

The NMMU brand must focus on creating and building a strong brand and Brand image that people would appreciate and would want to utilise or be part of as they believe that using the brand will make them someone that they want to be or how they want to be seen by others.
3.7.4.6 Self-image

The last facet of the identity prism is self-image as a brand has been identified as speaking to an individual’s self-image. Through customers’ attitudes towards particular brands, they develop a particular type of inner relationship with themselves. (Kapferer 2004:111). The self-image is the features with which the customers identify themselves as well as the same feature that they prefer to be reflected by the product or brand that they have chosen. The customer self-image is essential in the explanation of customer behaviour as customers purchase products that relates to their self-image (Janonis et al. 2007:73).

The last facet that the NMMU brand should focus on is delivering an exceptional brand and service to its students and other stakeholders, in an attempt to motivate them to have a positive attitude towards the brand and therefore form a positive inner relationship with themselves.

As mentioned above there are six facets that define the Brand identity as well as the boundaries within which a brand is free to develop or change. As illustrated by the brand identity prism (Figure 3.7), these facets are all interrelated and therefore form a well-structured entity. The content of one identity prism facet reverberate the content of another (Kapferer 2004:111).

A brand can only exist if it communicates, as a brand becomes obsolete if it remains silent or unused for a too long period of time. As illustrated in Figure 3.7 the brand identity prism also comprise of a vertical division. The facets on the left-hand side of the prism, namely the physique, relationship and reflection are the social facets that give the brand its outward expression and are all visible. The facets on the right-hand side of the prism, namely the personality, culture and self-image is those facets that are incorporated within the brand itself and within its spirit (Kapferer 2004:111).

Closely related to the brand identity prism (Figure 3.7), twelve categories of Brand identity elements have been identified by Aaker and Joachkimsthaler (2000:43) that is organised around four perspectives. These two figures coincide with one another with regards to the relationship, culture, personality and physical facets. Although
this has been said, the brand identity system and its elements provide a more detailed explanation about the Brand identity concept. These four perspectives and the accompanying elements are illustrated in Figure 3.8.

**Figure 3.8: Brand identity system and elements**


The four perspectives of Brand identity elements are known as the brand as a product, the brand as an organisation, the brand as a person and the brand as a symbol (Martín-Barbero & Sandulli 2006:143; Schroeder & Salzer-Mörling 2006:108). When considering the brand as a product it comprise of the scope of the product, the product attributes, the quality or value of the product, the uses of the product, the users of the brand as well as the country from which the product/brand originates. When considering a brand as an organisation one needs to consider the organisational attributes such as innovation, customer or consumer concern and trustworthiness as well as whether the organisation has a local or global presence. The brand as a person comprise of the personality element related to the brand, which includes characteristics such as whether the product/brand is genuine, energetic or rugged as well as the relationship between the brand and its customers. When considering the brand as a symbol attention should be paid to the visual images and metaphors as well as the heritage of the brand that forms the elements

3.7.5 BENEFITS OF CREATING BRAND IDENTITY

Considering the definition of Brand identity and the five Brand identity variables, namely Brand reputation, Brand relevance, Brand personality, Brand performance and Brand relationship, investing in Brand identity can be seen as being important due to a number of compelling reasons. A number on benefits are associated with a brand having a clear Brand identity. Three Brand identity benefits are identified by Wheeler (2003:13).

3.7.5.1 Ease of use

Brand identity makes it easy for customers to use the brand as a compelling Brand identity provide any business, anywhere and of any size with an instantly recognisable, distinctive and professional image, which places it in a position to succeed. Furthermore, an identity assist in managing the perception that customers have of a business as well as assisting in differentiating it from its competitors. A smart system expresses respect for the customer and assists in making it easier for customers to understand the brand’s features and benefits. Having an effective Brand identity encompasses brand elements like the name or logo, which is easy to remember or the design of a package that customers wants to own. (Han 2006:78).

3.7.5.2 Ease of sales force to sell

The identity of a brand makes it easy for the sales force to sell their products or services. Strategic Brand identity works across diverse cultures and audiences in order to build awareness and understanding of the business and the strengths it possesses. An effective Brand identity seeks to clearly communicating the business’s unique value proposition by making the intelligence of the business visible (Han 2006:78).

3.7.5.3 Building brand equity
Having an effective and superior Brand identity assist in building brand equity as a brand or a business’s reputation is regarded as one of the most valuable assets of a business. It is important for HEIs like the NMMU to build brand equity as their future relevance is dependent on their ability to build public awareness, preserve their reputations as well as maintaining their values. When a brand has a strong identity, it will assist in building brand equity through increased brand awareness, brand recognition and customer loyalty to the brand that will in turn assist in making the university more relevant to the country’s development needs (Han 2006:78).

3.8 COMPARISON BETWEEN BRAND IMAGE AND BRAND IDENTITY OF THE NMMU

After focusing on the definitions and content of Brand image and Brand identity, the main differences between these two concepts should be summarised as well as providing a contextualisation to the study undertaken on the Brand identity and Brand image of the NMMU (Han 2006:85).

The differences between the Brand identity and Brand image of the NMMU are summarised and represented in Table 3.2. Firstly, the primary focus of the Brand identity is on the university itself, while the Brand image primarily focuses more on the receivers of the marketing messages. A second difference between the two concepts is that the Brand identity of the university is created by marketing communicators or the chief executive officer of the university, whereas the Brand image is created by the stakeholders’ perceptions of the NMMU brand. Thirdly, the marketing message is designed, packaged and encoded by the NMMU in terms of the Brand identity and this message is then decoded by the recipients of the message, mainly the students of the NMMU. The final difference amongst the Brand identity and Brand image is that the Brand identity is established by the marketing communicators and it represents the institution’s reality, whereas the Brand image is perceived or received by the students and the Brand image represents the perceptions of the students. (Han 2006:85-86).
Table 3.2: Difference between the Brand identity and Brand image of the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Brand identity</th>
<th>Brand image</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Focus is on the NMMU</td>
<td>Focus is on the receiver or the student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Created by the marketing communicators or the chief executive officer (CEO)</td>
<td>Created by the perceptions of the NMMU students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The message is designed, packaged and decoded by the brand originator, the NMMU</td>
<td>The message is decoded by the recipients of the messages, the students of NMMU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NMMU Brand identity is sent to the students</td>
<td>NMMU Brand image is received or perceived by the students of NMMU</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Adapted from Han (2006:86); Nandan (2005:268).

3.9 BRAND IDENTITY VARIABLES INFLUENCING THE BRAND IMAGE OF A HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION (HEI)

As mentioned before, the primary objective of this study is to identify and investigate the factors that influence the NMMU’s Brand image through the use of the SNS, Facebook. A discussion on the Brand identity variables that affects the Brand image of HEIs needs to be presented, before such a research can be embarked on. For the purpose of this study the Brand image of a HEI refers to the expression of an organisation’s identity and its corporate brand. It is how the organisation is seen from the perspective of its stakeholders (students). An organisation can have numerous images, depending on which constituency is involved. Constituencies can be customers, consumers, investors or employees (Argenti & Druckenmiller 2004:369). In the sections to follow the five Brand identity variables (Brand reputation, Brand relevance, Brand personality, Brand performance and Brand relationship), which influences the Brand image of a HEI will be discussed and operationalised in Table 3.4

3.9.1 BRAND REPUTATION
The reputation of a brand refers to customers’ perceptions on the ability of the business and the brands to meet the needs and expectations of all their stakeholders (Fombrun & Gardberg 2000:13). Furthermore, Brand reputation can be defined as the estimation of an attribute, such as the price, quality or marketing skills of an entity’s consistency over time, where this estimation is determined by the entity’s willingness as well as its ability to perform a specific activity repeatedly in the same or similar way (Omar & Williams 2006:269).

There is a growing body of knowledge on reputation building literature, especially on the corporate branding perspective. Chaudhuri (2002) however questions the relationship amongst a brand’s reputation among its customers and the brand equity outcomes, such as the market share and relative price, from the firm’s viewpoint. The justification for this questioning is that Brand reputation can be considered as a separate construct from brand attitudes and that it plays a vital role in intervening in the relationship of advertising to brand equity outcomes such as the price and market share (Chaudhuri 2002). Chaudhuri (2002) is of the opinion that Brand reputation can be seen as a critical dimension of the Brand identity construct that impacts directly upon Brand image and brand commitment.

Weiss, Anderson and MacInnis (1999) further states that reputation relates to the perception of the extent to which a company is held in esteem or high regard. Fombrun’s (1996) research indicated that a company is held in high esteem or regard when it is visible to customers and credible. Advertising is concerned as one of the primary strategies in establishing the visibility and credibility of a company’s brand and therefore assist in establishing the link with Brand reputation in Chaudhuri’s (2002) model.

Omar and Williams (2006:270) are of the opinion that academics agree that the reputation of a business can be regarded as an important asset of the business and assist in generating goodwill for the business. It is important that the reputation of the business is continuously maintained, as it is exceedingly fragile and therefore extremely hard to repair when damaged (Omar & Williams 2006:270). A business that possesses an exceptional reputation will be able to distinguish themselves from their competitors. This outstanding reputation will lead to the
business’s customers assuming that the products offered by the business have a higher quality, which could enable the firm to charge premium price, attract better investors, enhance the business’s access to the capital market, generate positive word-of-mouth endorsement as well as act as a barrier against imitations (Omar & Williams 2006:270).

### 3.9.2 BRAND RELEVANCE

Brand relevance has five dimensions or attributes, namely the needs-values fit; meaning fit; inventiveness and uniqueness; whether the academic values of the NMMU is in line with the needs of the students and if the brand is well accepted.

Brand relevance refers to the degree to which the brand name communicates the descriptive information of the product or service category (Bao, Shao & Rivers 2008:151). When considering the current research, Brand relevance can be regarded as how well the NMMU brand communicates to its students in terms of the needs that they have (Han 2006:76). Brand relevance is essentially the added-value communications, which enriches the experiences when searching for information, entertainment and educate as well as addressing customer needs (Dahlén et al. 2010:109).

In brand categories that have higher Brand relevance, customers have an increased demand for brand benefits including reduced risk. Brand names have been identified as playing an essential role in customers’ buying decisions. As a result of the role that brand names play, it is noted that brands that are more relevant to customers would result in customers be willing to pay a higher price for the product (particular brand name) and will therefore be more loyal to their preferred brand (Fischer, Völckner & Sattler 2010:826).

### 3.9.3 BRAND PERSONALITY
It is important to note that when considering a brand as a personality not all brands evolve into consumer icons, specifically if the customers do not relate to or believes in the brand, the brand’s communications or if they sense that there is inconsistencies in what the brand communicates. The brand’s personality provides the brand with a more affluent source of competitive advantage than the functional features of the brand is able to (Ghodeswar 2008:5). The emotional characteristics of a brand is reflected by the Brand personality and these characteristics are symbolised by the metaphor of personality, which can be seen as evolving from the brand’s core values amongst others (Han 2006:76; Harris & De Chernatony 2001:444). Customers have been identified as choosing brands, which have particular personalities that will match their ideal personality that they aspire to have (Ponnam 2007:69).

By identifying Brand personality as the set of human characteristics associated with a brand, the Brand personality variable include five dimensions that is associated with particular facets or items as illustrated in Table 3.3, which contribute to forming the definition of Brand reputation for the purpose of this study (Azoulay & Kapferer 2003:149; Ponnam 2007:64).

**Table 3.3:** Brand personality dimensions and items
### Dimensions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimensions</th>
<th>Facets or items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sincerity</td>
<td>Down-to-earth, honest, wholesome, cheerful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excitement</td>
<td>Daring, spirited, imaginative, up-to-date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competence</td>
<td>Reliable, intelligent, successful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sophistication</td>
<td>Upper-class, charming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ruggedness</td>
<td>Outdoorsy, tough</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Azoulay & Kapferer (2003:149); Dahlén *et al.* (2010:219).

Whether researchers care to or not, in the mind of customers, a brand is seen as a person, just as definitely as a person can be seen as a brand. This comparison of a brand to a person has been based on the fact that just like people, brands have names, reflect particular styles and images, belong to a certain family as well as have unique personalities and physical characteristics. Individuals form a perception of another person based on their interactions with the person, and the behaviour and attitude expressed towards an individual by the person determines the individual’s attitude towards them. The relationships that people build between one another are based on honesty, reliability and predictability as well as trust. Therefore, when a brand bring about changes to their personae the relationships with their customers are likely to change (Coop 2004:67).

The Brand image is connected to Brand personality, as the Brand image can be regarded as the sum total of impressions that the customers receive that is combined in order to collectively form the Brand personality (Nandan 2005:266).

### 3.9.4 BRAND PERFORMANCE
The Brand performance variable has four dimensions or attributes, namely exceptional performance; ability of the brand to deliver on its promises and tangible benefits as well as good value for money.

### 3.9.5 BRAND RELATIONSHIP

Brands have been identified as relationships, because they provide the opportunity for an intangible exchange to take place between the provider of the brand (business) and its customers. It has been noted that customers often form relationships with brands in a similar way to the relationships that they form with other individuals in a social context (Ponnam 2007:67). Brand relationship can be seen as the enduring link that is created between the brand and its customers. A successful Brand relationship between brands and its customers leads to repeat purchases from the customers with the aim of creating loyalty towards the brand (Shimp 2010:17).

Employees have been seen as greatly affecting the relationship of a brand with its customers through the interaction between the relationship and personality of a brand. Based on the Brand relationship of a brand it is important for marketing communicators to assist employees in understanding the appropriate types of relationships required between employees and customers based on the core values of the brand (Han 2006:77). Brand relationship has five dimensions or attributes, namely knowledge and awareness of customer needs; customers’ long-time commitment, what customers deem to be important, customers should experience the product as being pleasurable to use and the probability of non-usage.

Deep knowledge of the customer-brand relationship is acquired only through consideration of the larger whole in which the customer-brand relationship is embedded (Fournier 1998:366). Fournier (1998:366) states that customer-brand relationships can be regarded as being more a matter of perceived goal compatibility than congruence among discrete product attributes and personality trait images. Furthermore, meaningful relationships are qualified along the perceived ego significance of the chosen brand and not along symbolic versus functional product
category lines or in terms of high versus low involvement classes (Coop 2004:92; Fournier 1998:366).

Every independent variable identified and discussed above as influencing the Brand image (dependent variable) of HEIs is operationalised in Table 3.4.

**Table 3.4: Variables influencing the Brand image of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Operationalisation</th>
<th>References</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brand identity</td>
<td>Brand identity is the unique set of brand associations that the brand strategist aims to create or sustain. The associations that the strategist aims to create or sustain symbolises what the brand stands for and imply a promise to customers from the organisation’s members.</td>
<td>Coop 2004:55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand reputation</td>
<td>The reputation of a brand refers to the collective demonstration of the past actions and results of a brand, which portrays the brand’s ability to deliver valued outcomes to numerous stakeholders. Brand reputation represents the overall significance, esteem and character of the brand as judged or viewed by the consumers.</td>
<td>Bosch, Venter, Han &amp; Boshoff 2006:12; Coop 2004:98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand relevance</td>
<td>Brand relevance illustrates how a brand communicates (‘speaks’) to its individual audiences. The communication of the brand ought to be relevant to the desires and needs of those audiences’ and not simply differentiating the brand from competitors. In addition, Brand relevance can further be described as a situation where the brand does what it states on the label.</td>
<td>Coop 2004:99; Bosch et al. 2006:12; Han 2006:76; Ind 2003:80; Perry &amp; Wisnom 2003:9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Brand personality | Brand personality is defined as the ‘set of human characteristics associated with a brand.’ Brand personality has the inclination to serve a self-expressive or symbolic function, whereas product-related attributes have the tendency to provide customers with a utilitarian function. Furthermore, Brand personality can be considered as the set of human characteristics related to a brand, which can be measured by means of five dimensions, namely sincerity; level of excitement; competence; sophistication and ruggedness. | Aaker 1997:347; Bosch et al. 2006:12; Coop 2004:114
---|---|---
Brand performance | The Brand performance delivered by an organisation’s products or services through its product cycle refers to the way in which customers experience the brand values. The Brand performance directly relates to customers’ perceptions as to what level the key and actual characteristics of the brand will operate. | Bosch et al. 2006:13; Coop 2004:100
Brand relationship | The brand relationships, which is characterised by the value intrinsic to the brand’s personality develop as a relationship between the brand and its customers. | Bosch et al. 2006:13; Harris & De Chernatony 2001:444

### 3.10 SUMMARY

In order to obtain a better understanding of the value of social media usage by HEIs and to enhance their Brand image, branding and the terms ‘Brand identity’ and ‘Brand image’ has been discussed in the chapter. Furthermore, the identifying
attributes and requirements of each core Brand identity variable identified in the study have been described.

The core Brand identity variables (independent variables) that are specifically important in the context of enhancing the Brand image of a HEI for this study is Brand reputation, Brand relevance, Brand personality, Brand performance as well as the Brand relationship.

For the purpose of this study five independent variables influencing the Brand identity and the Brand image of a HEI have been identified. Brand identity has been identified as the intervening variable, whereas Brand image has been identified as the dependent variable.

A proposed hypothesised model of the various core Brand identity variables influencing Brand identity and ultimately the Brand image of a HEI through the use of social media will be presented in Chapter 4.
CHAPTER 4

HYPOTHESES FOR THE INFLUENCE OF FACTORS ON THE BRAND IMAGE OF A HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION (HEI)

4.1 INTRODUCTION

For the purpose of study five independent variables influencing the Brand identity and the Brand image of a Higher Education Institution (HEI) have been identified. Brand identity has been identified as the intervening variable, whereas Brand image has been identified as the dependent variable.

The core Brand identity variables (independent variables) that are specifically important in the context of enhancing the Brand image of a HEI for this study is Brand reputation, Brand relevance, Brand personality, Brand performance as well as the Brand relationship.

Anecdotal, editorial and empirical evidence from the branding literature will be presented as support for the relationships hypothesised between the five independent variables and intervening and dependent variables. In total six relationships will be hypothesised from the abovementioned factors.

4.2 PROPOSED HYPOTHESISED MODEL

The Brand identity variables, namely Brand reputation, Brand relevance, Brand personality, Brand performance and Brand relationship included in the proposed hypothesised model (see Figure 4.1) are justified by an adequacy of theory in the branding literature. However, claims are not made that this model used for the purpose of this study has a comprehensive coverage of every possible relationship seen as influencing the Brand image of a HEI.
Figure 4.1: Proposed hypothesised model: The impact of Brand identity variables on the Brand image of a Higher Education Institution (HEI)

In the proposed hypothesised model (Figure 4.1), adapted from Han’s (2006) study, the five Brand identity variables (independent variables) identified as having an impact on the Brand image of a HEI are represented, namely *Brand reputation, Brand relevance, Brand personality, Brand performance* and the *Brand relationship*. In this study the Brand image is measured using two variables: the dependent variable *Brand image* and the intervening variable, namely *Brand identity*. 

Source: Adapted from Han (2006:7).
4.2.1 DEPENDENT AND INTERVENING VARIABLES: BRAND IMAGE AND BRAND IDENTITY

As illustrated in Figure 4.1 and mentioned above, the dependent variable and intervening variable in this study is the Brand image and the Brand identity of a HEI, the NMMU, respectively. For the purpose of this study, Brand image is the expression of an organisation’s identity and its corporate brand. The Brand image construct consist of two parts namely, academic and recognition. For the purpose of this study, Brand identity is the unique set of brand associations that the brand strategist aims to create or sustain. The associations that the strategist aims to create or sustain symbolises what the brand stands for and imply a promise to customers from the organisation’s members (Coop 2004:55).

Brand image and Brand identity is considered as being related concepts and are essential ingredients in building strong brands. For businesses to build and maintain brand loyalty from their customers, it is important that they ensure that these two concepts are in harmony. It is only when the customer understands and fully appreciates the brand message that value for the business as well as the customer can be created (Nandan 2005:270). It is important that customers perceive the brand as addressing their needs better than those of its competitors, because in an over-communicated environment it is especially easy for Brand identity that is created by the business and the Brand image that is created by the perceptions of the customers to be unbalanced (Nandan 2005:270-271).

When considering Brand image and Brand identity from a marketing communications perspective it is logical to believe that to obtain high levels of brand loyalty a strong link between Brand image and Brand identity should exist. Similarity between Brand image and Brand identity means that the customers have an agreement with and great understanding of the message delivered by the brand and will therefore likely be loyal to the brand (Nandan 2005:271).

A business’s competitive advantage is not achieved by the brand itself, instead the good results are achieved by those businesses who are capable of managing their brand, reflect their identity as well as determine its elements, uniqueness and their
identity. The development of the Brand image of a business while attempting to present the Brand identity to customers assists in enhancing the position of the business under the conditions of intense competition (Janonis et al. 2007:69).

The importance of the correspondence between brand identities that arise when building Brand image as well as the coding of meaning by customers should exist, which became apparent through the theoretical studies of Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2000), Kapferer (2003), Keller (1998) and De Chernatony (2001) (Janonis et al. 2007:75).

Based on Han’s study (2006), a statistically significant relationship was found between Brand identity and the two Brand image variables, namely Brand image: academic and Brand image: recognition, with a 99.9% confidence level. The findings indicated that the two hypotheses formulated to test these relationships have not been rejected, which indicated that there is indeed a positive relationship between Brand identity and Brand image (Bosch et al. 2006:24).

Based on the above discussion, it is hypothesised that:

\[ H^1: \] There is a positive relationship between Brand identity and Brand image.

4.2.2 INDEPENDENT VARIABLES: THE FIVE BRAND IDENTITY VARIABLES

The five key Brand identity variables that form the independent variables of this study include Brand reputation, Brand relevance, Brand personality, Brand performance as well as the Brand relationship.

4.2.2.1 Brand reputation

Brand reputation has seven dimensions or attributes, namely trustworthiness; reliability; honesty; heritage, legacy and traditions; clarity of messages; consistency and credibility (Han 2006:76), which contribute to forming the definition of Brand reputation for the purpose of this study.
For the purpose of this study, *Brand reputation* refers to stakeholders having trust in the NMMU brand, the reliability of the brand, the honesty with which the brand is communicated to stakeholders, as well as the heritage, legacy and traditions of the NMMU brand. Furthermore, Brand reputation refers to the clear and consistent with which the Brand identity is communicated and the ensuring the credibility in advertising the NMMU brand.

A vast amount of research has been conducted in order to examine the perceptions that customers form of a company's reputation (Fombrun & Shanley 1990; Fombrun 1996), the effect that reputation have on the price perceptions amongst customers (Campbell 1999), as well as the effect that corporate reputation have on management decision-making (Weiss et al. 1999).

An empirical study by Fombrun and Rivonda (1998), cited in Omar and Williams (2006:269), found businesses with a highly positive reputation appeared to present their core business mission and identity in a more systematic and consistent manner than those businesses with lower reputation rankings. Furthermore, these businesses focus on communicating significantly more information other than that of their products, but also about a variety of issues, which relates to their operations, history and identity. Having a satisfactory reputation is an essential driver of successful organisational relationships with the customers of the business, which could have a significant impact on the performance of the business.

A statistically significant positive relationship between the Brand identity variable, Brand reputation and Brand identity has been found in the study conducted by Han (2006). These findings indicated that there is a positive relationship between Brand reputation and Brand identity in terms of expectations and experiences as tested in the study (Bosch et al. 2006:22).

Based on the above discussion, the following relationship is hypothesised:

\[ H^2: \text{ There is a positive relationship between Brand reputation and Brand identity.} \]
4.2.2.2 Brand relevance

For the purpose of this study, *Brand relevance* refers to the needs-values fit of the brand, the meaning fit of the brand, the inventiveness and uniqueness of the NMMU brand, whether the academic values are in harmony with stakeholders’ needs and if the brand is well-liked by its stakeholders. In other words, Brand relevance can be regarded as how well the NMMU brand communicates to its students in terms of the needs they have. Brand relevance has five dimensions or attributes, namely the needs-values fit; meaning fit; inventiveness and uniqueness; whether the academic values of the NMMU is in line with the needs of the students and if the brand is well accepted.

Past research by Aaker (2004), cited in Mizik and Jacobson (2008:30), focused on attempting to highlight the important role of Brand relevance when marketing brands. With reference to Brand relevance studies, a brand can be considered as being exceptionally strong, because tracking studies indicated that the brand retains high levels of trust, esteem, perceived quality and possibly even perceived innovativeness, which contributes to the strength of the brand. In some situations in can however be noticed that the brand’s market share might be slipping away and it could be because the brand has become irrelevant to one or perhaps more important market segments (Mizik & Jacobson 2008:30).

Mizik and Jacobson (2008:30) found in their research that the financial markets are appreciative of the role that Brand relevance play in the market and in branding. Their study indicated that relevance has incremental information content in explaining stock returns such as sales growth and energy. Due to these findings Mizik and Jacobson (2008:30) is of the opinion that the financial markets consider brands as gaining relevance and therefore having increased potential for future profits. Furthermore, these findings could also be explained through the idea that relevance leads to improved financial performance such as sales growth.

Mizik and Jacobson (2008:30) further indicated that the financial markets consider Brand relevance as having delayed and carryover effects. As a result of these effects financial market participants observe businesses and when they are
considered as gaining in relevance, the markets adjust the profit expectations in anticipation of the future-term effects. They do not only make adjustments when the effect on the accounting performance is actually realised (Mizik & Jacobson 2008:30).

McNamara and Diwadkar (1996), cited in Bao, Shao and Rivers (2008:151), found that a brand with high relevance could establish a natural association between the brand, brand name and a product or service category. These associations facilitate increased encoding and processing of the brand name, which assist in leading to positive evaluation of the brand for the focal product or service (Bao, Shao & Rivers 2008:151).

It is therefore hypothesised that:

\( H^3: \) There is a positive relationship between Brand relevance and Brand identity.

4.2.2.3 Brand personality

For the purpose of this study, Brand personality refers to the sincerity of the brand, the level of excitement that the brand creates, the competency reflected by the brand, the sophistication and supremacy of the brand as well as the ruggedness and resilience of the NMMU brand. Brand personality has five dimensions or attributes, namely the sincerity, excitement, competence, sophistication and ruggedness of a brand, which contribute to forming the definition of Brand reputation for the purpose of this study.

Limited research has been conducted on Brand personality specifically and the symbolic use of brands in general, due to the lack of consensus of what Brand personality truly is (Aaker 1997:347).

It has been argued that the symbolic use of brands is possible due to customers frequently instilling brands with human personality traits, known as animism. Customers can also think about brands as if these brands were historical figures or famous celebrities as well as how they relate to the individual’s own self, which may
be as a result of the strategies that is used by marketers and advertisers to instil a brand with personality traits, such as anthropomorphisation, personification as well as the creation of user imagery. By making use of these techniques, the personality traits associated with an individual, have a tendency to be relatively enduring and distinct (Aaker 1997:347-348).

Research conducted by Plummer (2000) focused on establishing the semantic difference in terminology between Brand image and Brand personality. It has been noted that customers create an understanding of a brand through a variety of filters such as perceptions, experiences, misconceptions, value systems as well as all the ‘noise’ found within the communication system. Based on the above-mentioned information, the two critical aspects of Brand personality are therefore the input, which is what the brand managers wants the customers to feel and think about the brand, and the output, which is what they customers actually feel and think about the brand (Coop 2004:71).

Based on the research conducted by Aaker (1997), five Brand personality dimensions have been created that provides greater insight into the brand personality concept. The component factor analysis research from Aaker’s (1997) study indicates that customers perceive brands as having five distinct personality dimensions, namely sincerity, excitement, competence, sophistication and ruggedness (Aaker 1997:351).

From the research conducted by Han (2006) the empirical results indicated a statistically significant positive relationship between Brand personality and Brand identity for both the expectations and experiences tested in the study (Bosch et al. 2006:23).

Based on the above discussion, it is hypothesised that:

\[ H^4: \text{ There is a positive relationship between Brand personality and Brand identity. } \]
4.2.2.4 Brand performance

The Brand performance variable has four dimensions or attributes, namely exceptional performance; ability of the brand to deliver on its promises and tangible benefits as well as good value for money, which contribute to forming the definition of Brand reputation for the purpose of this study. For the purpose of this study, Brand performance has been identified as exceeding the stakeholders’ expectations, delivering on its promise, delivering tangible benefits and delivering value for money.

Customers have been identified as experiencing the brand values that an organisation delivers through the performance of its products and services during the product life cycle (Schultz, Hatch & Larsen 2000:142). Quality, reputation and performance are interlinked and from the customer’s perspective, a good reputation reduces the perceived risk of buying a company’s products and services, since the reputation is posted as a performance bond by the company (Dowling 2001:23).

According to Dowling (2001:23) a good reputation will be more significant in situations where:

- The customer is purchasing the product for the first time.
- The product is difficult to evaluate after it is consumed and the customers wants the psychological assurance that a good job has been performed.
- The customer ‘buys’ the product as well as the company as they have to trust that the company is offering a reliable product or service (Coop 2004:100).

Brand performance and Brand relevance are interrelated, but it has been noted that performance is a far richer construct than the pure intrinsic quality as demonstrated by actual product performance. Performance therefore contains an element of perceived ability on part of the product or brand (Coop 2004:101). Perceived quality is defined by Keller (2003:238) as customers’ perception of the overall quality or superiority of a product or service relative to relevant alternatives and with respect to its intended purpose. Perceived quality can therefore be seen as a global assessment that is based on customers’ perceptions of what constitutes a quality product as well as how well the brand rates on these dimensions. Hence,
performance is directly related to the levels at which customers perceive the actual and primary characteristics of the product will operate (Coop 2004:101).

A statistically significant positive relationship has been found between the Brand identity variable, Brand performance and Brand identity ($p<0.001$) in terms of expectations and experiences tested in the study by Han (2006) (Bosch et al. 2006:23).

Based on the above discussion, the following relationship is hypothesised:

$$H^5: \text{ There is a positive relationship between Brand performance and Brand identity.}$$

4.2.2.5 Brand relationship

Brand relationship has five dimensions or attributes, namely knowledge and awareness of customer needs; customers’ long-time commitment, what customers deem to be important, customers should experience the product as being pleasurable to use and the probability of non-usage, which contribute to forming the definition of Brand reputation for the purpose of this study.

For the purpose of this study, Brand relationship refers to the institution’s understanding of how its stakeholders feel, having an awareness that its stakeholders will utilise the brand for a long time and the active consideration of what its stakeholders deem to be important. Furthermore, the stakeholders who utilise the brand should find it pleasurable and the institution must be aware of the probability of non-usage of the brand.

Empirical research relating to relationships created at the level of the brand has been particularly limited and as a result of this the basic questions why, whether and in what forms customers seek and value relationships with brands continue to remain largely unanswered (Fournier 1998:343). The past research on brand relationships stops short of developing a grounded and fully articulated relationship-based framework for the study of consumer-brand interaction. The interpersonal
relationship literature, which is competent in informing this task has been scarcely utilised in the field of consumer behaviour research. None of these researches has started with the basic relationship principles that build an integrative framework to explore and explain the form and dynamics of those brand interactions in everyday life (Fournier 1998:344).

Fournier (1998) has also drawn certain conclusions based on his Brand relationship research. Fournier (1998) suggests that:

- Brand relationships are valid at the level of the customers’ lived experiences, regardless of whether one adopts a psychological or socio-historical interpretation of data.
- In the study conducted by Fournier (1998) it was noted that the customers did not only buy the brands, because they like the brand or because the brand worked well. The customers were involved in relationships with an assortment of brands in order to benefit from the meaning that the brands add to their lives.
- A number of the brand meanings are psychological and emotional, while other brand meanings can be regarded as being functional and utilitarian.
- All of the brand meanings are ego-centric and purposive and as a result is of great significance to the customers who engage with the brand.
- The processes of meaning provision, incorporation, manipulation and pronouncement validate the relationship notion in the consumer-brand domain (Coop 2004:91).

Furthermore, Fournier’s (1998) research resulted in the development of a six-faceted brand relationship quality construct (BRQ). The multifaceted nature of this construct emphasises that there is far more than the pull of positive feelings to keeping a relationship alive. This six-faceted construct proposes and combine other attachments in order to yield durability and strength over time. These are:

- *Love and passion:* At the heart of all strong brand relationships is a rich affective grounding indicative of the concepts of love in the interpersonal domain.
Self-connection: This relationship quality facet reflects the degree to which the brand delivers on significant identity concerns, tasks or themes and in so doing expressing an important aspect of self.

Interdependence: A high degree of interdependence enjoining customers and the brand also distinguish strong brand relationships. This interdependence involves frequent brand interactions.

Commitment: Strong brand relationships are characterised by high levels of commitment. These high levels of commitment within its various forms cultivate stability by implicating the self in relationship outcomes.

Intimacy: Fournier’s (1998) research indicated that knowledge structures develop around strongly held brands, where the richer layers of meaning reflecting deeper levels of intimacy and more resilient relationship bonds (Coop 2004:92).

From the research conducted by Han (2006) the empirical results indicated a statistically significant positive relationship between Brand relationship and Brand identity for both the expectations and experiences tested in the study (Bosch et al. 2006:23).

It is therefore hypothesised that:

\( H^6: \) There is a positive relationship between Brand relationship and Brand identity.

4.3 BRAND IDENTITY VARIABLES AND ITS APPLICATION TO THE NMMU

When a brand is faced with aggressive competition in the marketplace, its Brand reputation and Brand personality assist in distinguishing the brand from its competitors. This differentiation can result in increased customer loyalty as well as achieving growth. A resilient Brand identity that is thoroughly understood and experienced by customers aid in developing trust, which in turn assist in differentiating the brand from its competitors. It is imperative that a business establish a clear and consistent Brand identity, which can be achieved by linking
brand attributes with a communication method that can be easily understood by customers (Ghodeswar 2008:5).

Well known researchers (e.g. Aaker 1997; Coop 2005; Dowling 2001; Ind 2003; Perry & Wisnom 2003) on Brand identity are of the opinion and have consensus that Brand identity is created by the five key Brand identity variables, namely Brand reputation, Brand relevance, Brand personality, Brand performance and Brand relationship and the bonding effect of the strategic intent, which includes the institution’s mission, vision and core values. These variables are associated with numerous attributes that the marketing communication experts should communicate, either implicitly or explicitly (Han 2006:3). The core Brand identity building attributes and how they are applicable in the context of NMMU are listed in Table 4.1 and is a summary on the variables used to construct the definitions used for the purpose of the study’s independent variables.

**Table 4.1: The core Brand identity variables and attributes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Attributes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Brand reputation</strong></td>
<td>Having trust in the NMMU brand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reliability of the NMMU brand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Honesty with which the brand is communicated by the strategists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Heritage, legacy and traditions of the NMMU brand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A clear communication message</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Consistency – ensuring that a clear Brand identity is communicated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ensuring credibility in advertising the brand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Brand relevance</strong></td>
<td>Needs-values fit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Meaning fit of the NMMU brand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Inventiveness and uniqueness of the NMMU brand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Academic value in harmony with stakeholders’ needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The brand is well-liked by the stakeholders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Brand personality</strong></td>
<td>Sincerity of the brand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The level of excitement that the brand creates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The competency reflected by the brand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Brand performance</strong></td>
<td>The brand’s performance exceeds the stakeholders’ expectations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The brand delivers on its promise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The brand delivers tangible benefits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Delivers value for money</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Brand relationship</strong></th>
<th>Having an understanding of how the stakeholders feel</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The stakeholders will utilise this brand for a long time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Actively considers what its stakeholders deem to be important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The stakeholders who utilise the brand should find it pleasurable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Probability of non-usage of the brand</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Adapted from Coop (2004:114); Han (2006:4).

4.4 SUMMARY

In order to obtain a better understanding of the value of *Brand image*, *Brand identity* and the five Brand identity variables, these concepts has been discussed in the chapter. The Brand identity elements together with social can be identified as having a significant influence on the *Brand image* of a HEI. The five Brand identity variables (independent variables) that are specifically important in the context of *Brand identity* and *Brand image* for the purpose of this study is *Brand reputation*, *Brand relevance*, *Brand personality*, *Brand performance* and *Brand relationship*.

A proposed hypothesised model of the various Brand identity variables influencing *Brand identity* and *Brand image* of a HEI has been presented. For the purpose of this study the five independent variables influencing the *Brand identity* and *Brand image* of a HEI have been identified. *Brand identity* has been identified as the intervening variable, whereas *Brand image* has been identified as the dependent variable. Anecdotal, editorial and empirical evidence from branding literature has been presented as support for the relationships hypothesised between the five independent variables and the intervening and dependent variables. In total six relationships were hypothesised from the abovementioned factors.
In Chapter 5, the research methodology which will be employed for the purpose of the study will be discussed. This discussion will particularly focus on the population studied as well as the sampling techniques used to identify the sample groups. Furthermore, the data collection methods, the design, validity and reliability of the measuring instrument as well as the data analysis techniques used will be discussed.
CHAPTER 5

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Research design is defined as the master plan that specifies the methods and procedures, which are implemented to collect and analyse the information that is needed. It has been identified as the framework or blueprint that lay out the action plans for the research project. The predetermined objectives of the research are outlined in the design to ensure that the appropriate information is collected to solve the research problem (Zikmund 2003:65).

In South Africa very little research attention has been given to the use of social media by businesses in general and Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in particular in order to improve their Brand image. Therefore, this study intends to expand on the current limited knowledge and information available relevant to the use of social media by HEIs to improve their Brand image. The focus will be on the impact of the use of social media (Facebook) on the Brand image of a Higher Education Institution (HEI), namely the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU), which were used as the sample for this study. In an attempt to achieve the primary and secondary objectives of this study, this chapter gives an explanation of the research methodology that were utilised in order to solve the research problem.

The chapter will provide a description of the research design, research methodology, and the stages in the research design such as the population, sample and sampling procedure used for the study. Furthermore, this chapter will also highlight the data collection methods as well as data analysis methods used in this study.

5.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

Research is more than the mere process of gathering information, as suggested in Janse van Rensburg (2009:35). Research can be seen as the process of answering unanswered questions or the creation of questions that does not currently exist
Furthermore, Burns and Burns (2008:5) define research as the process of systematic investigation or enquiry into a particular issue or problem, which will assist in leading to new or improved knowledge. Therefore, good research is consequently systematic in the sense that it is planned, organised and has a specific goal (Janse van Rensburg 2009:35).

Cooper and Schindler (2006:136) states that there is a wide range of definitions for research design and there is no single definition that conveys the full range of important aspects that should be included in such a definition. Therefore, Cooper and Schindler (2006:136) state that research design:

- represents the blueprint for collecting, measuring and analysing data.
- facilitates the researcher in making adequate decisions with regards to the allocation of limited resources by posing critical choices in methodology.
- is the plan and the structure of the investigation that is developed in such a way to obtain answers to the research questions. The plan is an illustration of the overall programme of the research. The plan provides an indication as to how the researcher will implement the research, from the hypotheses formulation, including their implications for the research as well as the analysis of the data.
- expresses the structure of the research problem (framework, organisation and the configuration of the relationships amongst variables) as well as the procedures used to obtain the empirical evidence to test or support these relationships.

When conducting research, the researcher can utilise one of two types of contrasting research paradigms, namely the positivistic (quantitative) or phenomenological (qualitative) research paradigms. A paradigm can be seen as a set of fundamental beliefs that deals with vital or first principles. The paradigm signifies a worldview that defines for its holder, the nature of the world, the individual’s place in it and the range of possible relationships to that world and its parts (Guba & Lincoln in Denzin & Lincoln 1994).
The concept of quantitative research can be defined as a type of irrefutable research comprising of a large representative sample and moderately structured data collection procedures. The most important function of quantitative research is to test hypotheses (Zikmund 2003). Quantitative research endeavours to collect data through the use of objective methods to present information about relations, comparisons, and predictions and attempts to eradicate the investigator from the investigation (Key 1997). Key (1997) defines qualitative research as 'a generic term for investigative methodologies described as ethnographic, naturalistic, anthropological, field, or participant observer research.' This form of research highlights the importance of evaluating variables in the natural setting in which they are found as well as the importance of interaction between these variable.

The main elements of quantitative research include:

- It can be regarded as an objective world that has universal laws and causality.
- The contexts are value free.
- The quantitative research paradigm make used of precise and objective measures that are mainly associated with this type of research.
- The research remains separate from the subject of the study.
- The research can be regarded as being rigorous, linear and rigid and is based on hypothesis testing.
- The methods used to obtain data include re-analysis of secondary data, structured questionnaires, experimental studies as well as structured interviews.
- It can also be considered as being the implication of a scientific research method with deductive reasoning (Burns & Burns 2008:14).

Burns and Burns (2008:17) identify a few limitations with regards to quantitative research. Quantitative scientific inquiries have been considered as less valid and less easily applied in the human behavioural sciences as a result of humans’ ability to reflect on their own behaviour as well as to seek a purpose for or a meaning for their own or others’ behaviour. Therefore, the respondents to a quantitative study are prone to respond idiosyncratically to the elements in their environment. This
behaviour is as a result of their moods and needs at a particular moment as well as past expectations and experiences (Burns & Burns 2008:17).

A second limiting factor to quantitative research is the complexity of the human environment, which is caused by a large number of environmental forces that has an impact on the human. An individual interprets and respond to these forces in an active way (Burns & Burns 2008:17).

The final limitation to quantitative research is the ethical considerations connected to this type of research. With this form of research placing emphasis on objective measurement, the control and ignoring of thinking, it may lead to the degeneration of human individuality and may result in excluding the individual’s freedom of choice and personal responsibility. Due to these occurrences, the quantification of result can become an end in itself rather than being a humane endeavour, which seeks to explore the relationship amongst behaviour and the context within which it occurs (Burns & Burns 2008:18).

The advantage of qualitative research is that this form of research provides more exhaustive and comprehensive information about a research problem (Key 1997). Burns and Burns (2008:21) states that qualitative research on the other hand enables researchers with the opportunity to conduct a more in-depth study of the qualitative findings of a research study.

The main elements of qualitative research include:

- Qualitative research can be seen as a subjective world where people experience physical and social reality in different ways.
- It has subjective evaluation and meaningfulness of experience for the researcher conducting the research, because it is a social constructed reality.
- The researcher becomes fully involved with the individual subjects included in the research.
- It provides unambiguous values.
- It is a flexible research process, which flows from the data and material provided by the respondents of the research.
The methods used in qualitative research include participant observation, focus groups, ethnography and depth interviews that is generally inductive (Burns & Burns 2008:14).

Another advantage can be identified as the utilisation of skewed information and participant examination to describe the context or the natural setting of the variables under deliberation, including the interactions between these variables. Lastly, this type of research seeks to present a wider understanding of the entire research situation at hand (Key 1997). When conducting qualitative research, the researcher is mainly in close proximity to the respondents and the research field. This proximity regularly allows the researcher to view the qualities of human motivation, needs and pressure, which is often being overlooked. This closeness to the respondents enables the exposure of subtleties and complexities that could often go undetected in more standardised measures (Burns & Burns 2008:20).

A number of disadvantages relating to qualitative research have been identified. The biased nature of the investigation creates difficulty in ascertaining the reliability and validity of the approaches and information (Burns & Burns 2008:20). A second disadvantage is the fact that it is extremely complicated to prevent or become aware of researcher induce bias. Another disadvantage is the restricted possibilities of the research due to the thorough, wide-ranging data gathering approaches required (Key 1997). Furthermore, qualitative research and the evaluation of qualitative data requires a vast amount of time for collecting the data as well as the analysis and interpretation thereof (Burns & Burns 2008:20).

A comparison between the fundamental characteristics of the quantitative and qualitative research paradigms is presented in Table 5.1.
Table 5.1: Comparison between quantitative and qualitative research paradigms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Quantitative research</th>
<th>Qualitative research</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fundamental characteristics</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data is presented in numbers</td>
<td>Data is presented in numbers</td>
<td>Data is presented in pictures and words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large samples</td>
<td>Small samples</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reliability is high (Hard and replicable data)</td>
<td>Reliability is low</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Validity is low</td>
<td>Validity is high (Real, rich and deep data)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statistical analysis</td>
<td>Statistical analysis</td>
<td>Thematic analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meaning is determined</td>
<td>Meaning is determined</td>
<td>Meaning is derived</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Require enough information to state hypotheses</td>
<td>Grounded theory, built from the ground up</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science, with clearly defined parameters of scope</td>
<td>Tends to be a craft</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus on seeking out the facts or causes of the phenomena</td>
<td>Concerned with understanding the behaviour form the actor’s own frame of reference</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Researcher is removed from the data (outsider perspective)</td>
<td>Researcher is close to the data (insider perspective)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome orientated</td>
<td>Process orientated</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generalisable</td>
<td>Ungeneralisable</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Particularistic</td>
<td>Holistic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Approach to research</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Researcher is an objective observer, neither participate in, or influence what is being studied</td>
<td>Researcher learn by participating and/or being captivated in a research situation (subjective)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simple surveys</td>
<td>Individual in-depth interviews</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special instruments (360º surveys; surveys on communication efficiency)</td>
<td>Focus groups (on their own, pre-questionnaire, post-questionnaire or to give comments on survey results)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5.1 illustrates that quantitative and qualitative research presents two paradigms to research and as a result yields different research results. As the purpose of this study is to identify the impact of social media (Facebook) on the Brand image of a HEI, the positivistic (quantitative) research paradigm was selected as the most applicable research paradigm for this study.

The validation for utilising the positivistic (quantitative) research paradigm is based on the hypothesised relationships from the hypothesised model (See Figure 4.1) that needs to tested. The positivistic (quantitative) research methodology leads to the deductive process, which can be used to identify cause-and-effect relationships (Collis and Hussey, 2003:10; Bosch et al. 2006:16). This research paradigm is applicable because this study will gather primary data through the use of a questionnaire.

Research can further be categorised into three types, based on the research problem’s nature. These three types can be classified as exploratory, descriptive or causal research (Zikmund 2003:54). Exploratory research is the research that is conducted to clarify and describe the nature of a problem. Researchers conduct exploratory research in order to obtain an improved understanding about the magnitude of the problem. However, this type of research does not provide definite evidence, and therefore subsequent research is necessary (Zikmund 2003:54-55).
Descriptive research is research in which a meticulous situation is investigated either to identify whether it gives rise to any general theories, or to identify whether existing general theories are borne out by the specific situation (Goddard & Mellville 2004:8). Zikmund (2003:55) describes descriptive research as the research that is conducted in order to explain the characteristics of a population or phenomenon. A principal aim of descriptive research is to obtain answers to the questions of who, what, when, where, and how (Zikmund 2003:55). In contrast to exploratory research, descriptive research has some previous understanding of the research problem (Zikmund 2003:55). The third type of research, namely causal research, is conducted when the research problem has been narrowly defined in order to identify cause-and-effect relationships between variables (Zikmund 2003:56).

5.3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The term methodology may be viewed as a description of a process. In addition, it can be extended to incorporate a philosophically consistent collection of theories, concepts or ideas, due to the fact that they relate to a particular discipline or field of inquiry. In its simplest form, methodology refers to a simple set of methods and procedures, whereas a more sophisticated approach is based on focusing on philosophical assumptions, which underlie a particular study relative to the scientific method (Research Methodology 2010).

In the sections to follow emphasis will be placed on the chosen research methodology by making reference to the population, sampling procedure, data collection methods as well as the data analyses methods that were utilised in this study.

Seven steps are associated with obtaining an adequate sample for a research study. These steps include determining the population from which the target population can be chosen and then to choose the target population. The researcher then has to identity the sampling frame and the sampling units. Once these sampling elements have been determined the researcher can then identify the sample and the sufficient size of the sample. The researcher should determine which sampling procedure to use as a large number of sampling procedures exist, which can be chosen from.
Lastly, a number of measurement scales can be chosen from, which is discussed in the section to follow as illustrated in Figure 5.1.

**Figure 5.1: Selecting a sample**

![Diagram showing the steps in selecting a sample: Define the target population, Obtain or construct sampling frame, Determine whether probability or non-probability sampling methods will be chosen, Plan procedure for selecting the sampling units, Determine the sample size, Select actual sampling units, Conduct the fieldwork (Obtain the data).]

Source: Adapted from Han (2006:112); Zikmund (2003:372).

**5.3.1 THE POPULATION AND TARGET POPULATION**

The target population of a research study can be regarded as the specific and complete group of individuals relevant to the research project at hand (Zikmund 2003:373). Blumberg, Cooper and Schindler (2005:209-210) further states that the target population comprise of the complete group of specific population elements that is relevant to the research project. The target population of this study includes all the undergraduate and postgraduate students studying at one of the six NMMU campuses.
5.3.2 SAMPLING FRAMES AND SAMPLING UNIT

The sampling frame is closely related to the target population of a research study. The sampling frame is the list of elements from which the sample is actually drawn. In actual practice, the sample will be drawn from a list of population elements that is often somewhat different from the target population that has been defined. The sampling frame is also sometimes referred to as the working population (Zikmund 2003:373).

For the purpose of this study, the identified sampling frame comprised of all students of the NMMU. In other words, the sampling frame comprised of those students that have access to the Internet and their email accounts through computers or their mobile phones. In this study, the sampling frame and sampling unit are the same, by being all the students of the NMMU.

5.3.3 SAMPLING AND SAMPLE SIZE

Zikmund (2003:70;369) states that sampling comprise of any procedure, which utilises a small number of items or a portion of a population in order to make a conclusion relating to the whole population. The sample size of a sample used for a study comprise of the number of cases or observations, which is specified by the estimated variance of the population, the magnitude of acceptable error as well as the confidence level (Zikmund 2003:741). The aimed sample size for the first phase of questionnaire completion was 300 students, with an aim of 50% or more response rate during the second phase of questionnaire completion.

The sample used in this study comprised of two sample groups, namely the control group (registered and non-registered Facebook users) and the experimental group (students who 'like' the NMMU page on Facebook). The sample size for the control group comprised of 197 students who are registered and non-registered Facebook users, while the sample size for the experimental group comprised of 151 students who ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook.
When determining the size of the sample used for the study, there is certain principles that influence the size as mentioned by Blumberg et al. (2005:155). These principles are as follow:

- The greater the variance or dispersion within the population from which the sample is selected, the larger the sample must be in order to provide estimation precision;
- The larger the desired precision of the estimate, the larger the sample should be;
- The narrower the interval range, the larger the sample must be;
- The higher the required confidence level of the estimate is, the larger the sample should be;
- The larger the number of sub-groups of interest within a sample is, the greater the sample size should be, due to the fact that each sub-group must meet minimum sample size requirements;
- If the calculated sample size exceeds five per cent of the population, sample size may be reduced without sacrificing precision (Han 2006:113).

5.3.4 SAMPLING PROCEDURE

Sampling can be described as employing a process that makes use of a small number of items or a subset of a population to make the necessary observations about the entire population (Zikmund 2003:70). It is frequently not practical or possible to study the population as a whole; therefore it is essential to make general observations by focusing on a subset of the entire population known as a sample. The target population for this study therefore comprised of all the undergraduate and postgraduate students studying at one of the six NMMU campuses.

Sampling can be categorised as probability sampling and non-probability sampling techniques, illustrated in Table 5.2. Probability sampling techniques has statistical importance, due to the fact that the components in the sample all have an accepted probability to be selected. This feature of the probability sampling technique ensures that no bias or favouritism occurs (Pellissier 2007:32). A non-probability sampling
The technique is a sampling technique during which units of the sample are chosen on the basis of personal judgement or convenience (Zikmund 2003:380).

Table 5.2: Sampling techniques

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Probability sampling</th>
<th>Non-probability sampling</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Simple random sampling:</strong></td>
<td>Convenience sampling:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All the factors in the population which are not yet incorporated have an equal chance of being selected.</td>
<td>The items are selected for the convenience of the examiner due to the fact that the items are readily available, close by or agreed to participate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stratified random sampling:</strong></td>
<td>Judgement sampling:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factors are randomly selected after the population was selected according to a number of attributes.</td>
<td>The judgement of the researcher is used to identify items in order to save time or costs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cluster sampling:</strong></td>
<td>Quota sampling:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The population is separated into mutually exclusive groups which are internally diverse.</td>
<td>The population is stratified in relation with some attribute. Factors are then selected by means of a non-random technique.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Systematic sampling:</strong></td>
<td>Snowball sampling:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Every $k^{th}$ factor is drawn, where $k$ is previously established.</td>
<td>Factors are selected based on recommendation from other survey respondents who are suitable for the necessary profile.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The students participating in this study were selected by utilising a non-probability sampling technique, namely convenience sampling. Convenience sampling can be described as a technique that use those entities or people that are most expediently available for use in this particular sample (Zikmund 2003:380). The primary sampling units acquired from the convenience sampling was the 348 undergraduate
and postgraduate students of the NMMU who indicated their willingness to participate in the study.

The process of collecting the sample for the study was a complex procedure as it required a lot of attention and requesting from the researcher to the students to participate in this study. During the months of May, June and the first few days of August 2011, the researcher approached lecturers in the Business Management Department at the NMMU, requesting permission to approach the students in class and ask whether they will be willing to participate in the research study by providing their details on the forms that were circulated. On 27 May 2011 an email was created to attract and motivate students to participate in the study and was sent out to all students at all campuses. 91 students replied to the email by providing their details (Annexure F) and formed part of the database for both the sample groups. During June 2011 and July 2011 the researcher kept track of the number of students who indicated their willingness to participate in the study as well as sending out follow up emails requesting people to participate in the research study (Annexure F). Due to the low response rate in the experimental sample group (students who ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook) the researcher sent out emails to students from the control group (registered and non-registered Facebook users) on 22 June 2011, 7 and 8 July 2011 requesting them to also ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook and form part of the experimental group. Firstly, individuals with non-university email addresses were asked to ‘like’ the NMMU Facebook page and form part of the experimental group. Thereafter, every second individual of the remaining respondents on the database were requested to ‘like’ the page. On 28 July 2011 an email was sent out to thank all the students who accepted the request to ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook and move to the experimental sample group.

The researcher also placed a posting on the NMMU Facebook page on 20 and 22 June 2011 requesting students to leave their telephone number and email address as a comment when they are willing to participate in the study, where after their details were added to the database and mailing list.

A database comprising of 348 undergraduate and postgraduate students were therefore identified and used in the sampling process. The respondents were initially
applied personally in class (Annexure E), via their student email accounts (Annexure F) and via Facebook to ascertain whether they are willing to participate in the study. This procedure of identifying the respondents took place over a period of three months. The final sample of students who completed the first questionnaire consisted of 47 NMMU students who ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook and 51 NMMU students that may or may not have a Facebook profile, but who is not allowed to ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook (Registered and non-registered Facebook users). A breakdown of how the sample groups were determined is given in the data collection timeline in Annexure D of the study.

In order to motivate students to participate in the study, the researcher offered two Olympus camera gift packs, which the students could win when completing both the questionnaires that were sent out. The justification for offering two gift packs is that one was offered for the control group (registered and non-registered Facebook users) and one for the experimental group (students who ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook).

5.3.5 DESIGN OF THE MEASURING INSTRUMENT

Measurement is defined as the process through which the observations of a research study are converted into numbers (Burns & Burns 2008:96). There are four different types of measurement scales that a researcher can utilise in a research instrument in order to collect the data for a study. The choice of the measurement scale has important implications for the type of statistical analysis that a researcher may perform. The four measurement scales that a researcher can choose from is the nominal scale, ordinal scale, interval scale or the ordinal scale of measurement.

5.3.5.1 Nominal scale

A nominal measurement scale can be described as a scale where numbers or letters are assigned to objects and these numbers or letters serve as labels for classifying or identifying an object. The nominal scale of measurement is a measurement scale of the simplest type (Zikmund 2003:296). Burns and Burns (2008:97) states that the
nominal measurement scale is the classifications or names that are used to divide the obtained data into separate and distinct categories.

Collis and Hussey (2003:161) indicate that this scale enables researchers to only classify data that allows for inferences to be made on difference or equality, but nothing else (Han 2006:102).

5.3.5.2 Ordinal scale

Zikmund (2003:297) defines the ordinal scale of measurement as a scale that arranges alternatives or objects based on their magnitudes in an ordered relationship. When faced with such an event, a researcher can argue in terms of less than (<) or greater than (>), as this scale enables the researcher to rank order the data, therefore the name ‘ordinal’ (Leedy & Ormrod 2005:26). The ordinal measurement scale focuses on ranking the observations into categories, which has meaningful order (Burns & Burns 2008:98).

When considering the use for example of the ordinal scale in terms of the NMMU, a typical ordinal scale will enable respondents to rate the NMMU brand as being ‘excellent’, ‘good’, ‘fair’, or ‘poor’. However, these ratings do not give a clear indication of how much better ‘good’ is in relation to ‘fair’ (Han 2006:103).

5.3.5.3 Interval scale

Burns and Burns (2008:98) defines the interval measurements scale as one where measurements are made on a numerical scale in which the value of zero is random, but the intervals that exists between two successive points on the scale is equal.

The measurement scale chosen for this study is the interval scale of measurement. The researcher decided to use the seven-point Likert-type interval scale in order to obtain the data.

Interval measurement scales allow for more advanced statistical procedures to be performed on the obtained data. The arithmetic mean as a measure of central
tendency and the standard deviation as a benchmark of dispersion, product moment correlation, t-tests, F-tests and other parametric tests are the statistical procedures of choice (Blumberg et al. 2005:376). These statistical abilities served as a strong motivation for utilising the interval scale (Han 2006:104). Therefore, the measurement scale utilised for the purpose of collecting the data for this study is the seven-point Likert-type scale.

5.3.5.4 Ratio scale

A ratio scale can be defined as a scale that has absolute rather than relative quantities as well as possessing an absolute zero, in a situation where there is an absence of a given attribute (Zikmund 2003:298). The ratio measurement scale makes use of numerical measurements where the zero is a meaningful value and the difference between the various points’ values is important (Burns & Burns 2008:99).

Therefore, the ratio scale of measurement includes all of the powers of the previous types of measurement scales, but also includes the provision for absolute zero or origin (Blumberg et al. 2005:377). The ratio scale of measurement can be described in a better way by stating that a ratio scale has two characteristics, namely being equal measurement units as well as having an absolute zero point of origin. For example, where zero on the measurement scale reflecting a total absence of the quantity being measured (Han 2006:104; Leedy & Ormrod 2005:27).

Ratio scales can be considered as being different from the nominal, ordinal and interval scales, due to the fact that a ratio scale can express values in terms of multiples as well as fractional parts (Han 2006:104-105).

Leedy and Ormrod (2005:27) provide a summary of the most outstanding features of the four scales of measurement. These are:

- **Nominal scale**: One object is different from another object;
- **Ordinal scale**: The object used in this scale better, bigger or more than another object;
 Interval scale: One object of the scale is bigger than another object by having a large number of units more than the other object; and

 Ratio scale: The one object of the scale is bigger, brighter, taller or heavier by a large number of times than another object (Han 2006:106).

5.3.4.5 The measuring instrument used in this study

The measuring instrument used for the purpose of this study is an adaptation of the measuring instrument used for the study conducted by Han (2006) on the impact of Brand identity on the perceived Brand image of the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University. The measuring instrument (questionnaire) used for this study comprised of three sections. Section A of the questionnaire comprises of 53 items, pertaining to the impact of various Brand identity variables on the Brand image of the NMMU. This section aimed at requesting the respondents to provide their perceptions and opinions about the NMMU brand. A seven-point Likert-type interval scale was used where the participants were invited to signify their extent of conformity with each declaration. The respondents were requested to express their views and perceptions of the NMMU brand by interpreting the seven-point Likert-type interval scale (1 = strongly disagree and 7 = strongly agree). The structure of Section A of the research instrument’s heading is provided in Figure 5.2 and the complete research instrument (questionnaire) is included in Annexure A (Han 2006:98).

Figure 5.2: Section A: Heading of the research instrument

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The NMMU brand:</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

The 53 statements pertaining to the NMMU brand that were included in the research instrument can be subdivided in terms of the research variables identified for the
study. Table 5.3 illustrates the subdivision of the statements for every variable identified. Annexure B provides an indication on all the statements included in the questionnaire as well as which statements support each identified variable of the study.

Table 5.3:  Brand variable and the number of statements per variable

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements on</th>
<th>Number of statements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brand image</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand identity</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand reputation</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand relevance</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand performance</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand personality</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand relationship</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>53</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Adapted from Han (2006:99).

The researcher focused on acquiring the demographic details relating to the personal details of the respondent as well as details relating to their use of social media in general and the social networking site (SNS), Facebook in particular in Section B and C of the questionnaire. The biographical information obtained in Section B and C assisted in classifying the data obtained based on the different sample frames used for the study (Han 2006:99) (Annexure A).

The primary research on the study comprised on three sections:

- The collection of data from the respondents through a first questionnaire that was given to the students for completion;
- The collection of data through the posting of relevant statements relating to the dependent, intermediate and independent variables of the study; and
- The collection of data through a second questionnaire that was given to the students for completion.
5.3.4.5.1 Administration of the questionnaire

The online questionnaires were sent out to the potential respondents (N=348) of the study via email. The researcher emailed every respondent who indicated their willingness to participate in the study a link that connected them to the online survey. The online questionnaire was accompanied by a brief description on the purpose of the study.

The trustworthiness of the study and the likelihood of questionnaires to be completed and returned by respondents were enhanced by communicating with respondent by indicating that the Centre for Applied Management Sciences (CAMS) is a research unit functioning under the auspices of the Department of Business Management at NMMU. The CAMS is currently (2011) conducting research on the impact that social media has on the Brand image of a HEI with the sample being NMMU students. This questionnaire is designed to obtain information to assess the Brand image of NMMU and may form the basis for practical and corrective steps to facilitate the HEI to improve its Brand image, through paying attention to the key branding and social media elements.

After the first phase of questionnaires have been sent out and completed by the respondents the research study entered the second phase of data collection. After the one month period (13 September 2011 to 13 October 2011) of Facebook postings lapses the research study entered its third and last phase of data collection, which entailed the second questionnaire being sent out to the respondents. The second questionnaire was only sent to the respondents who completed the first questionnaire.

5.4 DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

This section indicates the methods utilised by the researcher in order to obtain and collect the data as well as the statistical methods used to analyse the obtained data. A completed breakdown of the entire data collection process from May 2011 to November 2011, including the development of the questionnaire, determining of the sample groups, developing the Facebook postings, dates of when postings were
made, follow up activities as well as requesting the sample groups to complete the questionnaire are described in Annexure D of the study.

5.4.1 DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Throughout the study, secondary as well as primary research was conducted in order to achieve the purpose of the study.

5.4.1.1 Secondary research

Secondary data is information that has been obtained for a separate purpose than the project at hand, but that can nonetheless contribute to the research (Zikmund 2003:63). An advantage of using secondary data is that it can be gathered at much faster pace and at a lower price (Zikmund 2003:63).

Before embarking on obtaining the primary data, a secondary search has been conducted. This was accomplished through a comprehensive literature search in order to establish the various branding and branding elements involved in branding a HEI, as well as the impact that the use of social networking sites may have on the Brand image of a HEI. International and national data searches were conducted. Literature searches have been conducted by consulting an assortment of secondary sources, such as online sources (e-journals and website articles), written publications (such as textbooks and journal articles) and previous studies on branding to identify the various key branding elements necessary to successfully market and communicate a HEI as well as how these elements influence the Brand image of an institution (university). Furthermore, previous studies on social media, social networking and the use of social media in HEIs were also consulted.

5.4.1.2 Primary research

Primary data is information acquired and accumulated specifically for the current research being conducted (Zikmund 2003:63).
There are a number of methods that researchers can use in order to obtain primary data, such as surveys, interviews and questionnaires (Blurt it 2010). For the purpose of collecting primary data on the impact of social media (Facebook) on the Brand image of a HEI, the survey method was utilised to obtain the needed data. The potential participants of the study have been given a self-administered prearranged measuring instrument or questionnaire to complete. This technique was utilised due to the fact that it provides a number of advantages for both the researcher and the respondents of the study. The use of a self-administered questionnaire provides greater geographic flexibility, it has a major cost advantage compared to personal interviews; and provides the respondents with convenience as they can complete the questionnaire in their own time (Zikmund 2003:213). It however, presents a number of disadvantages such as the absence of the interviewer, the use of standardised questions, a lengthy time period for the completion of the questionnaire as well as the fact that the questionnaires might be long that discourage the respondents.

With the purpose of this research study in mind, the intention of the measuring instrument was to obtain primary data in order to determine what the NMMU students’ view and perceptions were about the NMMU brand. Two questionnaires were designed for each one of the sample groups of the study. The primary items of the questionnaire remained the same, while Section B and C focused on obtaining specific information of the two sample groups, namely the registered and non-registered Facebook users and the students who ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook (Annexure A).

A pre-tested questionnaire testing the Brand image of the HEI were given to the two sample groups (an experimental group and a control group) to complete. The experimental group consisted of 47 undergraduate and postgraduate students who are registered on Facebook and ‘like’ the NMMU page. These students were exposed to daily messages regarding the improved Brand image of the institution. The control group consisted of 51 undergraduate and postgraduate students who were not allowed to form part of the experimental group, by ‘liking’ the NMMU page on Facebook. The control group was excluded from any exposure to the NMMU Facebook page. The experiment was conducted between May 2011 and November 2011.
During August 2011, the pre-tested questionnaire was given to both groups to complete, in order to measure the Brand image perceptions of the respondents at the beginning of the experiment. After the two month period since the initial questionnaire was administered and the postings placed on Facebook has lapsed in mid October 2011, the two groups, consisting of the same members, had to complete the same questionnaire in order to measure whether the use of social media, or specifically, Facebook and its tools, had an influence or improved the Brand image of the NMMU among the experimental group. The researcher utilised the fan page of the NMMU on Facebook in order to conduct the research. The researcher posted daily status messages, videos (content intervention) and photos aimed at improving the Brand image of the institution.

5.4.1.2.1 Phase one: First questionnaire request and reminder emails

Once the sample groups of the study were determined and identified the next stage in the primary data collection process was to send out the first questionnaire for completion to the control (registered and nonregistered Facebook users) and experimental groups (students who 'like' the NMMU page on Facebook). During the process of collecting the sample group and the administration of the first questionnaire the researcher focused on determining possible posting ideas that are relevant to each of the items that is included in the questionnaire to test the impact that social media have on the Brand image of a HEI (Annexure B). The first questionnaire were sent to the sample groups on the 5th and 6th of August via email for completion. During the period of 15 August 2011 to 9 September 2011 the researcher regular checked the online survey to determine how many students have completed the questionnaires as well as send out reminder emails (Annexure G) to the students who indicated their willingness to participate in the study, requesting them to complete the first questionnaire. On the 3rd and 4th of September 2011 the researcher also sent out a SMS containing the link to the questionnaire to the two sample groups in an attempt to motivate the respondents to complete the first questionnaire. On 6 September 2011 the last reminder email was sent out, requesting the respondents to complete the questionnaire. On the 9th of September 2011 the first questionnaire were completed and the data was extracted from the online survey for statistical analysis. From the 348 questionnaire that were sent out,
98 students completed the questionnaire, 51 in the control group (registered and non-registered Facebook users) and 47 in the experimental group (students who ‘like’ the NMMU Facebook page), which indicated a response rate of 28% (Annexure G).

5.4.1.2.2 Phase two: Postings on Facebook

On the 13th of September 2011 the researcher started with the first Facebook postings. The Facebook postings was done from 13 September 2011 to 13 October 2011 with an average of two to five postings being made ranging from general postings about the university, explanations on the logo and slogan of the university, achievements of the university and its students, asking questions as well as the visual description of the university through photos and links. A breakdown of all the postings made on the NMMU Facebook page during the period of the month is given in Annexure C. It is important to note that some of the postings made on Facebook support a number of items that were tested within the questionnaire. The reason for the overlap is that some of the posts corresponds with one another and also did not have any explicit content, which supports the statement, for example the statement that relates to the competence of the university or statements on whether the university meets or exceeds the expectations of its stakeholders. The Facebook postings were aimed at the students in the experimental sample group (students who ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook). The primary aim of making these Facebook postings was to attempt to change and improve the image that the students have about the NMMU brand through viewing and considering these postings and information placed on Facebook. Throughout the period of 13 September 2011 and 13 October 2011 the students were regularly informed to view their Facebook profiles and the NMMU Facebook page to see and view the postings made by the researcher (Annexure C). The final postings on Facebook were posted on Facebook on the 13th of October 2011. On the 16th of October 2011 the researcher placed a posting on Facebook to thank the students who participated in the Facebook data collection part of the study and reminded them to complete the second questionnaire that was then emailed to them (Annexure G).

During the experiment, the researcher was able to measure the effect that this content intervention had on students in the experimental group (registered and non-
registered Facebook users). The researcher made use of the statistical tools that the Facebook platform offers to test responses to any intervention by means of impressions, comments, feedback and likes. Impressions on Facebook refers to the raw number of times that the posting (story) has been seen on the institution’s Facebook wall as well as in the news feed of the individuals who ‘like’ the NMMU page. Feedback refers to the number of likes and comments that the posting received.

5.4.1.2.3 Phase three: Second questionnaire request and reminder emails

Although the questionnaire that was given to the students to complete in both rounds of questioning was exactly the same, a new online questionnaire had to be created for both sample groups as the published questionnaire could not be administered twice. Therefore, another questionnaire was created for the control group (registered and non-registered Facebook users) and the experimental group (students who ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook) for publishing and completion on 10 and 11 October 2011. On 17 October 2011 an email was sent to both the sampling groups requesting them to complete the second questionnaire for the research study. On the 17th and the 31st of October 2011 as well as the 1st and the 3rd of November the researcher sent out reminder emails, requesting students who have not yet completed the second questionnaire to do so (Annexure G). On the 4th of November 2011 an SMS was sent out to the respondents, requesting them to complete the second and last questionnaire. On the 17th of November 2011 the second questionnaire were completed and the data was extracted from the online survey for statistical analysis. From the 98 questionnaire that were sent out the second time, 47 students completed the questionnaire, 28 in the control group (registered and non-registered facebook users) and 19 in the experimental group (students who ‘like’ the NMMU Facebook page), which indicated a response rate of 48%.

For students to be placed in the draw to win one of the two Olympus camera gift packs, they were required to complete both the questionnaires sent to them for completion. Due to these requirements, 48 students’ names were placed in the draw for the gift packs. In the control groups (registered and non-registered facebook
users) 28 students formed part of the draw, while in the experimental group (students who ‘like’ the NMMU Facebook page) 19 students formed part of the draw for the gift packs. On the 2\textsuperscript{nd} of December 2011 the draw for the gift packs were performed.

5.4.2 DATA ANALYSIS METHODS

Data analysis refers to the process utilised by researcher to summarise large amounts of raw data, providing the opportunity to interpret results. It can also be seen as the process of rearranging, ordering or manipulating the data obtained in such a way that it provides descriptive information, which offer answers to the questions identified in the problem definition (Zikmund 2003:473). Cooper and Schindler (2006:77) defines data analysis as the process of reducing the accumulated data to a manageable size, looking for patterns, developing summaries as well as applying statistical techniques to the obtained data.

The data accumulated from the questionnaires have been exposed to multiple statistical analyses, such as exploratory factor analysis and the calculation of Cronbach Alpha coefficients, to measure the discriminant validity and reliability of the measuring technique, correspondingly to determine the impact that selected branding elements have on the Brand image of a HEI (NMMU), through the use of social media (Facebook).

Factor analysis is the process used to illustrate the relationships between numerous variables in terms of a small amount of fundamental, unobservable, random quantities or factors (Pellissier 2007:40). During the data analysis of the study exploratory factor analysis (EFA) were used to define factors based on item responses to questionnaire given to the respondents to the study to complete. Data imputation was required to provide sufficient data to run an EFA. These factors were then compared in a quasi-experimental design in order to determine the effects that the postings placed on Facebook to be viewed by the respondents in the experimental group (students who ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook) and the control group (registered and non-registered Facebook users), who were not exposed to the Facebook postings. The repeated measure analysis limits the
sample size to the number of respondents who completed the questionnaire after the Facebook intervention took place, a drawback in using this technique in a social media framework. For the purpose of the data analysis the two groups were categorised as ‘like’ (students who ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook) and ‘don’t like’ (registered and non-registered Facebook users) with the two measurement stages classified as ‘before’ and ‘after’. As a result of these classifications there were four groups, coded as ‘like before’ (LB), ‘like after’ (LA), ‘don’t like before’ (DLB) and ‘don’t like after’ (DLA). The number of usable responses was 28 and 19 for the control and experimental groups respectively. Multiple Regression methods were then employed to tests hypotheses of linear relationships between theorised dependent and independent factors. Multiple Regression analysis can be defined as the analysis of relationship in which the impacts of two or more independent variables on a particular, interval-scaled or ratio-scaled dependent variable are examined simultaneously (Zikmund 2003:576). Multiple Regression analysis’ primary objective is to evaluate the linear relationship between two or more variables (Pellissier 2007:38).

The data obtained from the questionnaire responses were a limiting factor and restricted the generalisation of the results for this study. To run the exploratory factor analysis (EFA), it was necessary to utilise simple imputation methods to provide sufficient data to define the factors used in the study. The missing values in the responses to the group categorised as ‘don’t like before’ (DLB) were imputed using modal replacement. In the cases of ties, the modal values closest to the mean values were imputed. There were only 51 respondents in this group, with 50 usable questionnaires after imputation. Of the four possible groups, this was the largest number of respondents, hence it was by necessity the group selected for the EFA.

Although the focus of this study is to measure the influence of social media (Facebook) on the Brand image of a HEI, the influence of various single item demographic variables have been measured. This has been done by means of Multiple Regression analyses.
5.4.2.1 The statistical analysis

The concept of statistics is considered as possessing four meanings, depending on the context of the situation. Therefore, statistics can imply:

- the actual data;
- the characteristics of the obtained data, like a percentage or average;
- the techniques used by the researcher for collecting, presenting, analysing and interpreting the data for decision making; and
- the science of developing and applying these techniques. (Burns & Burns 2008:6).

From this description Burns and Burns (2008:6) indicates that the best definition of statistics is that it is a branch of mathematics, which is concerned with assisting sensible decision making in the face of uncertainty. Statistics assist in creating/developing and utilises techniques for the careful gathering and effective presentation of the data to highlight patterns that are otherwise suppressed in unorganised data (descriptive statistics) as well as proper analysis of such numerical information (inferential or analytic statistics) (Burns & Burns 2008:6).

There are two different primary types of statistics that each have their own purpose for which it is being used (Burns & Burns 2008:7). These two types are descriptive statistics and inferential or analytical statistics. Descriptive statistics is defined as the process of collection, presentation, summarisation as well as the description of data, which assists in making the obtained data easier to comprehend. Inferential or analytical statistics are primarily used for predicting or inferring population parameters from sample measures (Burns & Burns 2008:8-9).

The collected data were statistically analysed, through the use of Statistica, version 10. Descriptive statistics were used to assess the constructs measuring family harmony. In order to determine the correlation between the dependent and independent variables the correlation coefficient will be calculated (Slaughter 2009:12).
5.4.3 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

Validity can be described as the degree to which a measure accurately reflects the concept that it is intended to measure (Pellissier 2007:12). Validity in a research study focuses on determining to what extent the testing instrument used in the research study actually measure the concept, variable or construct it purports to measure (Burns & Burns 2008:426). Furthermore, Crowther and Lancaster (2009:80) defines validity as the extent to which the research methods or the data collection method measures or describes what it is suppose to measure or describe.

The two main types of validity are known as external validity and internal validity. External validity is defined as the degree to which the results obtained from the sample of the study are validly generalisable to a particular context or population. However, internal validity is defined as the degree to which the results of the sample of the study are valid within the confines of the particular study. (Burns & Burns 2008:427;431). Burns and Burns (2008:431-435) identifies a number of threats to both external and internal validity as illustrated in Table 5.4.

**Table 5.4: Threats to external and internal validity**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Validity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>External validity</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Internal validity</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
to the researcher drawing conclusions that are invalid and increasing the possibility of making errors.

Fishing is a situation where researchers ‘fish’ around with all possible associations between variables in an attempt to indentify statistically significant findings, but this approach has a large likelihood of representing false results.

Unreliable measures can affect the statistical validity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>When the respondents to a study differ to a large extent on factors other than those being measured, it results in an increase of the amount of variance being produced.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>When conducting experimental research other events will take place during the period of when the pre-test and the post-test is administered and these occurrences which cannot be eliminated or prevents results in producing effects that can be mistakenly attributed to differences in treatment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In some cases natural maturation takes place during a research study, whether it is physical or psychological, which can result in producing differences that are independent of the experimental treatment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Another threat include statistical regression, which occurs due to the unreliability of the measuring instrument being used and to the extraneous factors unique to each group used in the experiment. This regression refers to a situation where a respondent might score high in the pre-test and lower in the post-test.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When using the same respondents in order to conduct repeated testing as well as using the same or similar measure of the construct or a pre-test, it can result in changes to the test score.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A further threat includes the unreliability of the instruments or tests being utilised for the study, which result in serious errors occurring.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An important threat that research studies face is the dropout of respondents throughout longitudinal studies that can result in</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
confounding the effects of the experimental variables and might result in the sample not being unbiased anymore.

The diffusion of treatment effects threat relates to those situations where the treatment effects might spread from a group being treated in an experiment to the control group of the study.

The last threat to internal validity is the placebo-effect, which is known as the process that involves the participants believing that they are receiving an intervention, where in actual fact they are not.


There are three approaches that a researcher can use in order to test validity, namely criterion-related validity; construct validity and content validity. Criterion-related validity refers to the technique used to determine whether the instrument used accurately forecast or analyse a particular variable. When the subject that a researcher wants to evaluate is closely correlated to that of an existing knowledge, compare the results obtained with the new instrument with that of the old. This is done to determine whether there is a high correlation that exists. This describes the process of construct validity. Content validity is the process of establishing whether the instrument tests what it is supposed to measure (Goddard & Mellville 2003:47).

It has been noted that validity implies reliability, which means that a valid measure needs to be reliable, but a reliable measure does not have to be valid (Pellissier 2007:12). Reliability refers to the extent to which an evaluation or instrument consistently measures an element (Pellissier 2007:12). Furthermore, reliability relates to the extent to which a particular data collection method or approach yields the same or similar results in different occasions or situations (Crowther & Lancaster 2009:80). Reliability has been highlighted as referring to consistency (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2007:367).

There are three common approaches to determine the reliability of a researcher instrument. These approaches are the test re-test reliability, test for internal consistency and the alternative forms reliability (Saunders et al. 2007:367). In order
to determine the reliability of a research instrument with the test re-test approach, the reliability is obtained by correlating the data with the data that was obtained from the same questionnaire in a situation that was as close or similar to the conditions as possible. Internal consistency entails the correlation of the responses obtained for each question in the questionnaire with those to other questions included in the questionnaire. The consistency of the research instrument is determined or measured either across a subgroup of the questionnaire’s questions or of all the questions in the questionnaire. In order to determine the reliability of a research instrument through the alternative form, it involves the comparison of responses to alternative forms of the same question or group of questions (Saunders et al. 2007:367).

5.5 SUMMARY

Chapter 5 discussed the relevant research design and methodology utilised in this study. Specific reference was made to the various types of sampling techniques, the sample as well as the target population. The two types of research paradigms, namely phenomenological (qualitative) and positivistic (quantitative) research paradigms were discussed and compared. It was indicated that the study focuses on utilising a quantitative (positivistic) research paradigm. The chapter also provides an explanation on the data collection and the data analysis methods employed as well as the reliability and validity of the study and utilised methods.

Results of the research will be provided in Chapter 6 by presenting, analysing and interpreting the data.
CHAPTER 6

EMPIRICAL RESULTS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter 5 the research design and methodology utilised to identify the impact that the various branding variables have on the Brand identity and Brand image of a Higher Education Institution (HEI), through the use of social media, was discussed. The empirical data collected was subjected to a variety of different statistical analyses to determine the validity and reliability of the measuring instrument. The hypothesised model was empirically tested by means of Multiple linear regression. Chapter 6 presents a summary of these findings.

Chapter 6 will commence by summarising the demographic characteristics pertaining to the respondents and their use of social media. This will be followed by a discussion of the results of the exploratory factor analysis to assess the constructs’ discriminant validity in the hypothesised model. The reliability of the constructs is then discussed by evaluating the Cronbach Alpha coefficient analysis. The chapter will be concluded by discussing the results of the Multiple linear regression analyses that were used to determine the percentage of variation in the dependent variable, brought about by the variations in the independent variables.

6.2 DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION OF RESPONDENTS

The demographics section provides a description of the sample size that was drawn from the sample population, the response rate of the respondents as well as a description of the demographic details and the usage of social media by respondents.

6.2.1.1 Sample size and response rate

The sample size is defined by Zikmund (2003:741) as the number of cases or observations specified by the estimated variance of the population, the acceptable
magnitude of error as well as the confidence level. During the first phase of sending out the 348 questionnaires, 98 questionnaires were completed and returned by the respondents. Of the 98 questionnaires completed only 97 questionnaires were usable. 47 Questionnaires were completed by the control group (registered and non-registered Facebook users) and 51 questionnaires were completed by the experimental group (students who ‘like’ the NMMU Facebook page). Therefore, the final sample size used for the purpose of this study was 97 respondents. The total response rate for the control group (registered and non-registered Facebook users) and the experimental group (students who ‘like’ the NMMU Facebook page) was calculated as 27.87 % as illustrated in Table 6.1.

Table 6.1:  Response rate – First phase of questionnaires

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number of respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of questionnaires emailed</td>
<td>348</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of questionnaires returned</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Usable questionnaires returned</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response rate</td>
<td>27.87 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The response rate is the total number of questionnaires returned and completed divided by the number of qualified people who were requested to or contacted to participate in the study (Eybers 2010:138; Zikmund 2003:215). The response rate for the first phase of the questionnaires sent out for completion in this study by the control group (registered and non-registered Facebook users) was calculated as 25.38 % as illustrated in Table 6.2.
Table 6.2: Control group response rate – First phase of questionnaires

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of questionnaires emailed</th>
<th>197</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total number of questionnaires returned</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Usable questionnaires returned</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response rate</td>
<td>25.38 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The response rate for the first phase of the questionnaires sent out for completion in this study by the experimental group (students who ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook) was calculated as 31.13 % as illustrated in Table 6.3.

Table 6.3: Experimental group response rate – First phase of questionnaires

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of questionnaires emailed</th>
<th>151</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total number of questionnaires returned</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Usable questionnaires returned</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response rate</td>
<td>31.13 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

During the second phase of sending out the 98 questionnaires to both the sample groups for completion, 47 questionnaires were completed and returned. All 47 questionnaires sent out were usable in the data analysis process. The response rate for the second phase of questionnaires sent out for completion in this study by the control group (registered and non-registered Facebook users) was calculated as 54.90 % as illustrated in Table 6.4.
The response rate for the second phase of questionnaires sent out for completion in this study by the experimental group (students who ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook) was calculated as 40.43 % as illustrated in Table 6.5.

### Table 6.5: Experimental group response rate – Second phase of questionnaires

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of respondents</th>
<th>51</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of questionnaires emailed</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of questionnaires returned</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Usable questionnaires returned</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response rate</td>
<td>40.43 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.2.2 **DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION OF RESPONDENTS DURING THE FIRST PHASE OF DATA COLLECTION**

Section B of the questionnaire comprised of numerous questions regarding the demographic information of the respondent. Section C of the questionnaire consisted of questions concerning the respondents’ use of social media. Two questionnaires were constructed for the purpose of this study. A questionnaire for
the control group (registered and non-registered Facebook users) was constructed as well as a questionnaire for the experimental group (students who 'like' the NMMU page on Facebook). Section B of the two questionnaires differed from one another with regards to whether the students 'like' the NMMU Facebook page or not. In addition, Section B also obtained general demographic information of the respondents and assisted the researcher in ascertaining the reasons as to why the respondents ‘do not like’ the NMMU Facebook page or what the respondents ‘like’ about the NMMU Facebook page. Section C focused on obtaining information from respondents who are active Facebook users and assisted in identifying the Facebook usage activities of the respondents.

Table 6.6 to Table 6.9 relates to the demographic and usage information of the control group (registered and non-registered Facebook users, N = 50) and the experimental group (students who ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook, N = 47) for the first phase of data collection, namely the first questionnaire being sent out for completion by the two sample groups. The discussion on the demographic findings on the first phase data collection will only touch on the major findings. The justification for only discussing the findings of the items selected by the majority of the respondents is that the data analyses such as the factor analysis, Multiple linear regression, Cronbach Alpha coefficients and quasi-experimental design analysis is only conducted on the data of the respondents who completed the first phase of data collection when the questionnaires were sent out. This was necessary as it was the largest single dataset. Therefore, the demographic results for the second phase of data collection will be discussed in detail.

Table 6.6: Demographic information pertaining to the control group (registered and non-registered Facebook users) – Section B – First phase

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Registered Facebook users</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>88.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing value(s)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Like’ the NMMU Facebook page</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>62.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>28.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing value(s)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reasons for not liking the NMMU Facebook page</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am not aware of the NMMU Facebook page</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>16.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of information</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am not interested</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is not cool</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing value(s)</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>72.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age of respondents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 – 20</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>36.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 – 25</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>56.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 – 30</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30+</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing value(s)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender of respondents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>42.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>52.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing value(s)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of qualification</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>70.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post graduate</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>28.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing value(s)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of study</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-time</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>98.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing value(s)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty of study</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 6.6 illustrates that majority (88.0%) of the control group respondents are registered Facebook users and have a profile on the social networking site (SNS) Facebook. It can be noted that the majority (62.0%) of the control group respondents who participated in the first phase of questionnaires being sent out for completion ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook. Table 6.6 also highlights that 16.0% of the respondents indicated their reason for not liking the NMMU page on Facebook as not being aware of the existence of the page. The majority (56.0%) of the control group respondents were between the ages of 21 and 25. Table 6.6 also illustrates that the majority (52.0%) of the control group respondents were female. Of the 50 control group respondents who participate in this first phase of the study, the majority (70.0%) of the respondents are undergraduate students at the NMMU. In this study, 49 (98.0%) of the 50 control group respondents specified that they are full-time student at the NMMU. The majority (58.0%) of the control group respondents studies in the Business and Economic Sciences Faculty. Table 6.6 illustrates that the majority (80.0%) of the respondents are studying at the South campus of the NMMU.
Table 6.7: Demographic information pertaining to the experimental group (students who ‘like’ the NMMU Facebook page) – Section B – First phase

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Registered Facebook users</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>100.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing value(s)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>‘Like’ the NMMU Facebook page</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>100.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing value(s)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What they ‘like’ about the NMMU Facebook page</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The logos</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>21.3 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The news updates</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>53.2 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Links to interesting pages</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>38.3 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photos</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>38.3 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video posts</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8.5 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.1 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing value(s)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.1 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age of respondents</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17 – 20</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>34.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 – 25</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>55.3 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 – 30</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8.5 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30+</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.1 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing value(s)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender of respondents</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>19.1 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>80.9 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing value(s)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level of qualification</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>91.5 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post graduate</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8.5 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing value(s)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type of study</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-time</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>100.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing value(s)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Faculty of study</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business and Economic Sciences</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>40.4 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.1 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8.5 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering, The Built Environment and Information Technology</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>21.3 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.3 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Science</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6.4 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>17.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing value(s)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Campus on which contact sessions take place</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Campus</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>57.4 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Campus</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>27.7 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Avenue Campus</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10.6 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missionvale Campus</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.3 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George Campus (Saasveld)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bird Street Campus</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing value(s)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.7 illustrates that the entire experimental group respondents (100.0%) have a profile on the SNS Facebook. Furthermore, the entire group of experimental group respondents (100.0%) also ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook. Table 6.7 also highlights that 53.2% of the experimental group respondents indicated their primary
reason for liking the NMMU page on Facebook as the access to the news updates about the university. The majority (55.3%) of the experimental group respondents were between the ages of 21 and 25. Table 6.7 illustrates that the majority (80.9%) of the experimental group respondents were female. Of the 47 experimental group respondents who participated in this first phase of the study, the majority (91.5%) of the respondents are undergraduate students at the NMMU. In this study, all 47 experimental group respondents (100.0%) specified that they are full-time student at the NMMU. The majority (40.4%) of the experimental group respondents studies in the Business and Economic Sciences Faculty. Table 6.6 illustrates that the majority (57.4%) of the experimental group respondents are studying at the South campus of the NMMU.

Table 6.8: Demographic information pertaining to the control group’s (registered and non-registered Facebook users) Facebook usage – Section C – First phase

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency of usage</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am always logged on</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7.8 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once a day</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>15.7 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than once a day</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>37.3 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once a week</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13.7 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than once a week</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11.8 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.9 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing value(s)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.9 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Access point</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>From home</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>45.1 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From university</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>49.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Via cell phone</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>78.4 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From Internet cafes</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.9 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From WiFi hotspots</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>25.5 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing value(s)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7.8 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Different social networking site profiles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Platform</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>90.2 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twitter</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>37.3 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flickr</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MySpace</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9.8 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LinkedIn</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YouTube</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>19.6 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>17.6 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing value(s)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7.8 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Time spent on social networking sites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Range</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 5 minutes</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7.8 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 – 10 minutes</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>35.3 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 – 30 minutes</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>25.5 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 – 60 minutes</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>17.6 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 60 minutes</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.9 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing value(s)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7.8 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Purpose for logging in

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Finding old friends</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>54.9 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keeping contact with friends and family</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>82.4 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Viewing photos, videos, status updates, links etc. of friends</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>68.6 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uploading photos, videos, status updates, links etc.</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>45.1 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socialising with your current friends</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>74.5 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obtaining information on jobs, internships, and/or graduate programme opportunities</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>27.5 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obtaining information on the university (NMMU)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>21.6 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.9 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing value(s)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7.8 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Number of Facebook friends

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Range</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 – 100</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>15.7 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>101 – 200</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>19.6 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>201 – 300</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>23.5 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The majority of the control group respondents (37.3%) indicated that they log onto Facebook more than once a day. From the 50 control group respondents that participated in this phase of the study, 40 control group respondents (78.4%) specified that they access Facebook via their mobile phones. Most of the control group respondents (90.2%) indicated that they have a profile on the SNS Facebook. Eighteen (35.3%) of the 50 control group respondents highlighted that they spend between five and 10 minutes on a SNS when logged onto the site. From the responses it can be seen that the majority (82.4%) of the control group respondents mainly utilises Facebook to keep in contact with their friends and family. The majority (23.5%) of the respondents have between 201 and 300 friends on Facebook.

Table 6.9: Demographic information pertaining to the experimental group's (students who ‘like’ the NMMU Facebook page) Facebook usage – Section C – First phase

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency of usage</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am always logged on</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>29.8 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once a day</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14.9 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than once a day</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>19.1 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once a week</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8.5 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than once a week</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6.4 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access point</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From home</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>27.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From university</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>37.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Via cell phone</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>74.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From Internet cafes</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From WiFi hotspots</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing value(s)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Different social networking site profiles</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>80.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twitter</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>38.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flickr</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MySpace</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LinkedIn</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YouTube</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>31.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing value(s)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time spent on social networking sites</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 5 minutes</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 – 10 minutes</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>25.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 – 30 minutes</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>31.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time Range</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 – 60 minutes</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6.4 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 60 minutes</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8.5 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing value(s)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Purpose for logging in**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Finding old friends</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>36.2 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keeping contact with friends and family</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>76.6 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Viewing photos, videos, status updates, links etc. of friends</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>55.3 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uploading photos, videos, status updates, links etc.</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>46.8 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socialising with your current friends</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>61.7 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obtaining information on jobs, internships, and/or graduate programme opportunities</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>27.7 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obtaining information on the university (NMMU)</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>29.8 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.3 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing value(s)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Number of Facebook friends**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Friends</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 – 100</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.3 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>101 – 200</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>19.1 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>201 – 300</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>31.9 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>301 – 400</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6.4 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>401 – 500</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.1 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500+</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>17.0 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The majority (29.8%) of the experimental group respondents indicated that they are always logged onto Facebook. From the 47 experimental group respondents that participated in this phase of the study, 35 experimental group respondents (74.5%) specified that they access Facebook via their mobile phones. Most of the experimental group respondents (80.9%) indicated that they have a profile on the SNS Facebook. Fifteen (31.9%) of the 47 experimental group respondents highlighted that they spend between 11 and 30 minutes on a SNS when logged onto the site. From the responses it can also be seen that the majority (76.6%) of the experimental group respondents mainly utilises Facebook to keep in contact with their friends and family. The majority (31.9%) of the experimental group respondents have between 201 and 300 friends on Facebook.

6.2.3 DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION OF RESPONDENTS DURING THE SECOND PHASE OF DATA COLLECTION

Table 6.10 to Table 6.13 relates to the demographic and usage information of the control group (registered and non-registered Facebook users, N = 28) and the experimental group (students who ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook, N = 19) for the second phase of data collection, namely the first questionnaire being sent out for completion by the two sample groups. These results will be discussed in full in the section below.

Table 6.10: Demographic information pertaining to the control group (registered and non-registered Facebook users) – Section B – Second phase

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Registered Facebook users</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Like the NMMU Facebook page</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing value(s)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reasons for not liking the NMMU Facebook page</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am not aware of the NMMU Facebook page</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of information</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am not interested</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is not cool</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing value(s)</td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age of respondents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 – 20</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 – 25</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 – 30</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30+</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing value(s)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender of respondents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing value(s)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of qualification</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post graduate</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing value(s)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of study</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-time</td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing value(s)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10.7 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Faculty of study</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business and Economic Sciences</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>57.1 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.6 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering, The Built Environment and Information Technology</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10.7 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.6 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Science</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10.7 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10.7 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing value(s)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.6 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Campus on which contact sessions take place</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Campus</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>71.4 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Campus</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14.3 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Avenue Campus</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missionvale Campus</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.6 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George Campus (Saasveld)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7.1 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bird Street Campus</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing value(s)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.6 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.10 illustrates that majority (96.4%) of the control group respondents were registered Facebook users, while only one (3.6%) of the respondents did not have a profile on the SNS Facebook. It can be noted that the majority (64.3%) of the control group respondents in this group ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook, while 9 (32.1%) indicated that they ‘do not like’ the NMMU page on Facebook. Only one (3.6%) control group respondent did not give any indication as to whether he/she ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook. Table 6.10 also highlights that 17.9% of the control group respondents indicated their main reasons for not liking the NMMU page on Facebook as not being aware of the existence of the page and not being interested in the page respectively, while the remaining control group respondents indicated lack of information (7.1%); the page not being ‘cool’ (10.7%); and other (3.6%) as the reasons why they ‘do not like’ the NMMU page on Facebook. In this second phase
of the study, 18 (64.3%) of the 28 control group respondents did not give an indication as to why they 'do not like' the NMMU Facebook page.

The majority (53.6%) of the control group respondents were between the ages of 21 and 25, while 42.9% of the respondents were between the ages of 17 and 20. The remaining control group respondents were between the age of 26 and 30 (3.6%). None of the control group respondents in the second phase of the study in the control group were older than 30 years of age. Table 6.10 illustrates that the majority (53.6%) of the control group respondents were female, whereas 46.6% of the control group respondents were male.

Of the 28 control group respondents who participate in this second phase of the study, the majority (71.4%) of the control group respondents are undergraduate students at the NMMU, while 28.6% of the control group respondents are currently engaged in post graduate studies at NMMU. In this study, 25 (89.3%) of the 28 control group respondents specified that they are full-time students at the NMMU. Three (10.7%) of the control group respondents did not state whether they are a full-time or part-time student.

The majority (57.1%) of the control group respondents studies in the Business and Economic Sciences Faculty. The remainder of the control group’s respondents studies in the Education; Engineering, The Built Environment and Information Technology; Science; Health Science and Arts Faculties, with the following valid percentages respectively, 3.6%; 10.7%; 3.6%; 10.7% and 10.7%. In this study, none of the control group respondents indicated that they study in the Law Faculty. Of the 28 control group respondents, one (3.6%) of the respondents did not indicate in which Faculty he/she is studying.

Table 6.10 illustrates that the majority (71.4%) of the respondents are studying at the South campus of the NMMU, while the remaining respondents studies at the North campus (14.3%), Missionvale campus (3.6%) and George campus (Saasveld) (7.1%). One (3.6%) of the respondents did not indicate at which campus his/her main contact sessions are taking place.
Table 6.11: Demographic information pertaining to the experimental group
(students who ‘like’ the NMMU Facebook page) – Section B –
Second phase

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Registered Facebook users</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing value(s)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Like’ the NMMU Facebook page</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing value(s)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What they ‘like’ about the NMMU Facebook page</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The logos</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>27.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The news updates</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>94.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Links to interesting pages</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>36.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photos</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>73.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video posts</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing value(s)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age of respondents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 – 20</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 – 25</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>73.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 – 30</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30+</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing value(s)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender of respondents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>36.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>63.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing value(s)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of qualification</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of study</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>84.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post graduate</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing value(s)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faculty of study</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Business and Economic Sciences</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>21.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering, The Built Environment and Information Technology</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>36.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Science</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing value(s)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Campus on which contact sessions take place</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>South Campus</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>63.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Campus</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>31.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Avenue Campus</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missionvale Campus</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George Campus (Saasveld)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bird Street Campus</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing value(s)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.11 illustrates that all 19 of the experimental group respondents (100.0%) during the second phase of questionnaires being sent out for completion were registered Facebook users. It can also be noted that all the experimental group respondents (100.0%) ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook. Table 6.11 also highlights that 94.7% of the experimental group respondents indicated their main reason liking the NMMU page on Facebook as it allows them access to the news.
updates about the university, followed closely by the photos (73.7%) uploaded by the university. The remaining experimental group respondents indicated the logos (27.8%) and links to interesting pages (36.8%) as the reasons why they ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook.

The majority (73.7%) of the experimental group respondents were between the ages of 21 and 25, while 10.5% and 10.5% of the experimental group respondents were between the ages of 17 and 20 and 26 and 30, respectively. One (5.3%) of the experimental group respondents was older than 30 years of age. Table 6.11 illustrates that the majority (63.2%) of the experimental group respondents were female, whereas 36.8% of the experimental group respondents were male.

Of the 19 experimental group respondents who participate in this second phase of the study, the majority (84.2%) of the experimental group respondents are undergraduate students at the NMMU, while 15.8% of the respondents are currently engaged in post graduate studies at NMMU. In this study, all 19 experimental group respondents (100.0%) specified that they are full-time students at the NMMU.

The majority (36.8%) of the experimental group respondents studies in the Engineering, The Built Environment and Information Technology Faculty. The remainder of the experimental group respondents studies in the Business and Economic Sciences; Education; Science; Health Science and Arts Faculties, with the following valid percentages respectively, 21.1%; 5.3%; 15.8%; 10.5% and 10.5%. In this study, none of the experimental group respondents indicated that they are studying in the Law Faculty.

Table 6.11 illustrates that the majority (63.2%) of the experimental group respondents are studying at the South campus of the NMMU, while the remaining respondents studies at the North campus (31.6%) and the Second Avenue Campus (5.3%), respectively.

Table 6.12: Demographic information pertaining to the control group’s (registered and non-registered Facebook users) Facebook usage – Section C – Second phase
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency of usage</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am always logged on</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.6 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once a day</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>39.3 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than once a day</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>32.1 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once a week</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14.3 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than once a week</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7.1 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing value(s)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.6 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Access point</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>From home</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>50.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From university</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>50.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Via cell phone</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>78.6 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From Internet cafes</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.6 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From WiFi hotspots</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17.9 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing value(s)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.6 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Different social networking site profiles</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>96.4 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twitter</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>32.1 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flickr</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.6 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MySpace</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.6 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LinkedIn</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7.1 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YouTube</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>28.6 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10.7 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing value(s)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.6 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time spent on social networking sites</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 5 minutes</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10.7 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 – 10 minutes</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>32.1 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 – 30 minutes</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>28.6 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 – 60 minutes</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17.9 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 60 minutes</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7.1 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The majority (39.3%) of the control group respondents indicated that they log onto Facebook once a day, while 32.1% of the control group respondents indicated that they access Facebook more than once a day. Of the 28 control group respondents during the phase of questioning only one control group respondent (3.6%) stated that he/she is always logged onto Facebook. The remaining control group respondents indicated that they logged onto Facebook once a week (14.3%) or more than once a week (7.1%). Of the 28 control group respondents who participated in this phase of the study, none indicated that they access Facebook on a monthly basis only. One (3.6%) of the 28 control group respondents did not indicate his/her frequency of Facebook usage.
From the 28 control group respondents that participated in the second phase of questionnaires being sent out for completion, 22 control group respondents (78.6%) specified that they access Facebook via their mobile phones. The remaining control group respondents indicated that they access Facebook from home (50.0%); from university (50.0%); from Internet cafes (3.6%) or from wi-fi hotspots (17.9%). One (3.6%) of the 28 control group respondents did not indicate his/her main access point.

Most of the control group respondents (96.4%) indicated that they have a profile on the SNS, Facebook, followed by a profile on Twitter (32.1%). The control group respondents to the study also indicated that they have profiles on Flickr (3.6%); MySpace (3.6%); LinkedIn (7.1%); YouTube (28.6%) as well as other SNS (10.7%). One of the 28 control group respondents did not indicate on which SNS they have a profile.

Nine (32.1%) of the 28 control group respondents highlighted that they spend between five and 10 minutes on a SNS when logged onto the site. The remaining control group respondents indicated that they spend less than five minutes; 11 to 30 minutes; 30 to 60 minutes or more than 60 minutes with the following valid percentages respectively, 10.7%; 28.6%; 17.9% and 7.1%, when logged on a SNS. One (3.6%) of the control group respondents did not indicate how much time he/she spend on a SNS.

From the responses it can be seen that the majority (89.3%) of the control group respondents mainly utilises Facebook to keep in contact with their friends and family. The respondents furthermore also log onto Facebook with the aim of finding old friends (53.6%); viewing photos, videos, status updates, links etc. of friends (71.4%); uploading photos, videos, status updates, links etc. (50.0%); socialising with their current friends (64.3%); obtaining information on jobs, internships, and/or graduate programme opportunities (32.1%) or obtaining information on the university (NMMU) (17.9%). One (3.6%) of the 28 control group respondents did not indicate his/her purpose for logging onto Facebook.

The majority (25.0%) of the control group respondents have between 301 and 400 friends on Facebook, while 17.9% of the control group respondents have between
201 and 300 friends. The remainder of the control group respondents have between zero and 100 friends (10.7%); between 101 and 200 friends (10.7%); between 401 and 500 friends (10.7%) and more than 500 friends (10.7%) on Facebook. Four (14.3%) of the control group respondents did not indicate how many friends they have on Facebook.

Table 6.13: Demographic information pertaining to the experimental group’s (students who ‘like’ the NMMU Facebook page) Facebook usage – Section C – Second phase

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency of usage</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am always logged on</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15.8 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once a day</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>21.1 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than once a day</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>52.6 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once a week</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.3 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than once a week</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.3 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing value(s)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Access point</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>From home</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>42.1 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From university</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>31.6 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Via cell phone</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>94.7 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From Internet cafes</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From WiFi hotspots</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing value(s)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Different social networking site profiles</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>100.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twitter</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>63.2 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flickr</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MySpace</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.3 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LinkedIn</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15.8 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose for logging in</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finding old friends</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>31.6 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keeping contact with friends and family</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>47.4 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Viewing photos, videos, status updates, links etc. of friends</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>47.4 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uploading photos, videos, status updates, links etc.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>26.3 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socialising with your current friends</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>42.1 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obtaining information on jobs, internships, and/or graduate programme opportunities</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10.5 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obtaining information on the university (NMMU)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10.5 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.3 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Missing value(s)</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Facebook friends</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 – 100</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10.5 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>101 – 200</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>21.1 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>201 – 300</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>26.3 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>301 – 400</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10.5 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>401 – 500</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.3 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500+</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>26.3 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Missing value(s)</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The majority (52.6%) of the experimental group respondents indicated that they log onto Facebook more than once a day, while 21.1% of the respondents indicated that they access Facebook once a day. Of the 19 experimental group respondents during the phase of questioning three respondents (15.8%) stated that they are always logged onto Facebook. The remaining experimental group respondents indicated that they logged onto Facebook once a week (5.3%) or more than once a week (5.3%). Of the 19 experimental group respondents who participated in this phase of the study, none indicated that they access Facebook on a monthly basis only.

From the 19 experimental group respondents that participated in this phase of the study, 18 respondents (94.7%) specified that they access Facebook via their mobile phones. The remaining experimental group respondents indicated that they access Facebook from home (42.1%) or from university (31.6%). None of the experimental group respondents indicated that they access Facebook from Internet cafes or from wi-fi hotspots.

All 19 of the experimental group respondents (100.0%) indicated that they have a profile on the SNS, Facebook, followed by a profile on Twitter (63.2%). The experimental group respondents to the study also indicated that they have profiles on MySpace (5.3%); LinkedIn (15.8%); YouTube (36.8%) as well as other SNS (10.5%). None of the experimental group respondents have a profile in the SNS Flickr.

In equal share with 42.1%, eight of the experimental group respondents highlighted that they spend between five and 10 minutes or 11 and 30 minutes respectively, on a SNS when logged onto the site. The remaining experimental group respondents indicated that they spend 30 to 60 minutes or more than 60 minutes with the following valid percentages respectively, 10.5% and 5.3%, when logged on a SNS.

From the responses it can be seen that the majority (47.4%) of the experimental group respondents mainly utilises Facebook to keep in contact with their friends and family or for viewing photos, videos, status updates, links etc. of friends (47.4%). The experimental group respondents furthermore also log onto Facebook with the
aim of finding old friends (31.6%); uploading photos, videos, status updates, links etc. (26.3%); socialising with their current friends (42.1%); obtaining information on jobs, internships, and/or graduate programme opportunities (10.5%); obtaining information on the university (NMMU) (10.5%) or for other purposes (5.3%).

In equal share with 26.3%, five of the experimental group respondents indicated that they have between 201 and 300 friends on Facebook or more than 500 friends on Facebook, respectively. The remainder of the experimental group respondents have between zero and 100 friends (10.5%); between 101 and 200 friends (21.1%); between 301 and 400 friends (10.5%) and between 401 and 500 friends (5.3%) on Facebook.

6.2.4 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY OF THE MEASURING INSTRUMENT

Validity is defined by Zikmund (2003:302) as the ability of the measuring instrument or scale to measure what it purports to measure. Reliability entails assessing the degree of consistency between multiple measurements of a variable and intends to ensure that responses are not too varied at different points in time (Cooper & Schindler 2007). Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was utilised in this study to assess the discriminant validity of the instrument used to measure the constructs included in the hypothesised model (Figure 4.1). The software program Statistica Version 10.0 was used for this purpose of assessing the discriminant validity. The low response rate necessitated using an unrotated principal components extraction on individual factors. The limitations to this method include the dimensional restriction imposed by not rotating and the inability to reduce data in one assessment. This was however a necessity for factors with insufficient items and for consistency was adopted throughout the analysis.

Seven factors were extracted from the original hypothesised model. The factor analysis results for each independent (Brand reputation, Brand relevance, Brand personality, Brand performance and Brand relationship), intervening and dependent variable identified for this study are reported in Table 6.14 to Table 6.27 and are followed by the reliability assessments using Cronbach Alpha coefficients. The EFA was done on items theorised as individual factors. To run the EFA, it was necessary to utilise simple imputation methods to provide sufficient data to define the factors.
used in the study. This approach was necessary as there were insufficient responses in the ‘don’t like before’ (DLB) group (registered and non-registered Facebook users) to run the analysis collectively. The missing values in the responses to the group categorised as ‘don’t like before’ (DLB) were imputed using modal replacement. In the cases of ties, the modal values closest to the mean values were imputed. The analysis of the data used a principal component unrotated extraction. There were only 51 respondents in the control group (registered and non-registered Facebook users), with 50 usable questionnaires after imputation. Of the four possible groups (the two control groups (registered and non-registered Facebook users and the two experimental group (students who ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook), this was the largest number of respondents, hence it was by necessity the group selected for the EFA. The sample size of 50 (control group – registered and non-registered Facebook users) required a minimum factor loading of 0.75 (Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson & Tatham 2006). Section 6.2.4.1 to 6.2.4.7 therefore provides a discussion on the EFA results for the control group (registered and non-registered Facebook users) who were taken as the benchmark for doing the EFA for the entire study.

6.2.4.1 Brand reputation

Of the nine items intended to measure the construct Brand reputation, only eight items (Rep2, Rep3, Rep4, Rep5, Rep6, Rep7, Rep8 and Rep9) loaded as expected and satisfied the critical cut-off value of 0.75. The first item Rep1 with its factor loading of 0.70 was below the critical cut-off value and was therefore excluded from the factor score (Table 6.14). The resulting items of the construct Brand reputation yielded a Cronbach Alpha value of 0.942 (Table 6.15), which exceeded the recommended 0.70 cut-off (Hair et al. 2006). This estimate therefore implies that the items in the questionnaire measuring the construct Brand reputation are reliable.

Table 6.14: Factor one – Brand reputation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Factor loading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Rep2  The NMMU brand signals legitimacy  -0.803
Rep3  The NMMU brand is advertised in a credible manner  -0.902
Rep4  The NMMU brand sends clear communication messages to stakeholders  -0.891
Rep5  The NMMU brand conveys a high sense of reliability  -0.783
Rep6  The NMMU brand is communicated in a honest manner  -0.756
Rep7  The NMMU brand creates a high level of confidence  -0.896
Rep8  The NMMU brand reflects pride (including heritage, legacy and traditions)  -0.852
Rep9  The NMMU brand is communicated in a consistent manner  -0.855

Expl. Var*  6.190
Prp. Total  0.688

*Eigenvalues

For the purpose of this study, *Brand reputation* refers to a brand that is legitimate, advertised in a credible and honest manner, clearly and consistently communicated, reliable, reflects pride (including heritage, legacy and traditions) and creates high levels of confidence with its stakeholders.

**Table 6.15: Summary for scale (Factor one – Brand reputation)**

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mean</strong></td>
<td>40.700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Standard deviation</strong></td>
<td>9.630</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Valid N | 50
---|---
Cronbach Alpha | 0.942
Standardised Alpha | 0.943
Average inter-item correlation | 0.685

6.2.4.2 Brand relevance

Of the eight items originally intended to measure the construct *Brand relevance*, only four items (Rlv1, Rlv4, Rlv5 and Rlv6) loaded onto this factor as expected and satisfied the critical cut-off value of 0.75. The items Rlv2, Rlv3, Rlv7 and Rlv8 with their factor loadings of 0.71, 0.70, 0.72 and 0.74 respectively, did not load as expected and were therefore excluded from the factor score (Table 6.16). The resulting items of the construct *Brand relevance* yielded a Cronbach Alpha of 0.853 (Table 6.17), which exceeded the recommended 0.70 cut-off (Hair et al. 2006). This Cronbach Alpha coefficient for *Brand relevance* implies that the instrument used to measure this construct is reliable.

**Table 6.16: Factor two – Brand relevance**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Factor loading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rlv1</td>
<td>The NMMU brand reflects my educational needs</td>
<td>-0.784</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rlv4</td>
<td>The NMMU brand reflects academic value in line with stakeholders’ needs</td>
<td>-0.760</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rlv5</td>
<td>The NMMU brand is well accepted by stakeholders</td>
<td>-0.869</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rlv6</td>
<td>The NMMU brand is modern and up-to-date</td>
<td>-0.833</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expl. Var</td>
<td></td>
<td>4.722</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prp. Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.590</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Eigenvalues

For the purpose of this study, *Brand relevance* refers to the ability of a brand to meet stakeholders’ educational needs, to be innovative, reflects academic value in line with stakeholders’ needs and a brand that is well accepted by its stakeholders.
Table 6.17: Summary for scale (Factor two – Brand relevance)

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>19.720</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard deviation</td>
<td>4.974</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid N</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cronbach Alpha</td>
<td>0.853</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standardised Alpha</td>
<td>0.865</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average inter-item correlation</td>
<td>0.623</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.2.4.3 Brand personality

Four items were originally used to measure the construct Brand personality, three of which satisfy the 0.75 critical cut-off value. Therefore only three factors (Pnl1, Pnl2 and Pnl3) loaded as expected. In the case of the fourth item (Pnl4), the factor loading of 0.744 was just below the critical cut-off value and the item thus omitted from the factor score (Table 6.18). The resulting items of the construct Brand personality yielded a Cronbach Alpha value of 0.825 (Table 6.19). This estimate exceeded the recommended 0.70 cut-off (Hair et al. 2006) implying reliability for the items in the questionnaire measuring the construct Brand personality.

Table 6.18: Factor three – Brand personality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Factor loading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pnl1</td>
<td>The NMMU brand reflects competence</td>
<td>-0.771</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pnl2</td>
<td>The NMMU brand reflects sophistication</td>
<td>-0.852</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pnl3</td>
<td>The NMMU brand is superior to competition</td>
<td>-0.890</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expl. Var</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.6677</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prp. Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.6669</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Eigenvalues

For the purpose of this study, Brand personality refers to a brand that is competent, sophisticated and superior to competition.

Table 6.19: Summary for scale (Factor three – Brand personality)
Mean | 15.000
---|---
Standard deviation | 3.476
Valid N | 50
Cronbach Alpha | 0.825
Standardised Alpha | 0.827
Average inter-item correlation | 0.621

6.2.4.4 Brand performance

Of the six items intended to measure the construct *Brand performance*, all six items (Pfm1, Pfm2, Pfm3, Pfm4, Pfm5 and Pfm6) loaded as expected and satisfied the critical cut-off value of 0.75 (Table 6.20). The resulting items of the construct *Brand performance* yielded a Cronbach Alpha value of 0.933 (Table 6.21), which exceeded the recommended 0.70 cut-off (Hair *et al.* 2006). This estimate therefore implies the reliability for the items in the questionnaire measuring the construct *Brand performance*.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Factor loading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The NMMU brand delivers on promises -0.766

The NMMU brand reflects a good value for money -0.819

The NMMU brand exceeds expectations in terms of promises -0.927

The NMMU brand is performing well in terms of my expectations -0.860

The NMMU brand provides high quality academic programmes -0.885

The NMMU brand always delivers academic services on time -0.929

Explanation of variance (Expl. Var) 4.503

Proportion of variance explained (Prp. Total) 0.751

*Eigenvalues

For the purpose of this study, Brand performance refers to a brand that delivers on its promises, reflects good value for money, exceeds the expectations in terms of its promises and performs well in terms of stakeholders’ expectations, provides high quality academic programmes and delivers academic services on time.

Table 6.21: Summary for scale (Factor four – Brand performance)

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mean</strong></td>
<td>28.420</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Standard deviation</strong></td>
<td>8.149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Valid N</strong></td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cronbach Alpha</strong></td>
<td>0.933</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Standardised Alpha</strong></td>
<td>0.932</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Average inter-item correlation</strong></td>
<td>0.709</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6.2.4.5 Brand relationship

Of the three items originally intended to measure the construct *Brand relationship*, two of the three items (Rsh2 and Rsh3) loaded onto this factor as expected and satisfied the critical cut-off value of 0.75 (Table 6.22). The first item, Rsh1, with a factor loading of 0.70, was below the critical and was therefore excluded from the factor score (Table 6.22). The resulting items of the construct *Brand relationship* yielded a Cronbach Alpha value of 0.774 (Table 6.24), which exceeded the recommended 0.70 cut-off (Hair *et al.* 2006). This Cronbach Alpha coefficient for *Brand relationship* implies that the instrument used to measure this construct is reliable.

**Table 6.22:** Factor five – Brand relationship

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Factor loading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rsh1</td>
<td>I prefer the NMMU brand to those of other Higher Education Institutions</td>
<td>-0.704</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rsh2</td>
<td>The NMMU brand makes me feel part of the institution</td>
<td>-0.882</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rsh3</td>
<td>The NMMU Brand identity is strongly established in the mind of stakeholders</td>
<td>-0.895</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expl. Var</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.077</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prp. Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.692</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Eigenvalues

For the purpose of this study, *Brand relationship* refers to the brand of a HEI being preferred above those of other HEIs, makes the students feel part of the institution and the Brand identity is strongly established in the minds of its stakeholders.
Table 6.23: Summary for scale (Factor five – Brand relationship)

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>15.120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard deviation</td>
<td>3.967</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid N</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cronbach Alpha</td>
<td>0.774</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standardised Alpha</td>
<td>0.7724</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average inter-item correlation</td>
<td>0.551</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.2.4.6 Brand identity

Of the fifteen items intended to measure the construct *Brand identity*, fourteen items (Id1, Id2, Id3, Id4, Id5, Id7, Id8, Id9, Id10, Id11, Id12, Id13, Id14 and Id15) loaded as expected and satisfied the critical cut-off value of 0.75. The sixth item, Id6, with its factor loading of 0.73, was below the critical and was therefore excluded from the factor score (Table 6.24). The resulting items of the construct *Brand identity* yielded a Cronbach Alpha of 0.953 (Table 6.25), which exceeded the recommended 0.70 cut-off (Hair *et al.* 2006). This estimate therefore implies the reliability for the items in the questionnaire measuring the construct *Brand identity*. 
Table 6.24: Factor six – Brand identity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Factor loading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Id1</td>
<td>The NMMU brand reflects engagement with all stakeholders</td>
<td>-0.784</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Id2</td>
<td>The NMMU brand reflects the university’s vision</td>
<td>-0.757</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Id3</td>
<td>The NMMU brand reflects the university’s mission</td>
<td>-0.769</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Id4</td>
<td>The NMMU brand is differentiated from those of other Higher Education Institutions in the country</td>
<td>-0.832</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Id5</td>
<td>The NMMU brand reflects strong values</td>
<td>-0.754</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Id7</td>
<td>The NMMU brand is a verbal expression of the institution</td>
<td>-0.799</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Id8</td>
<td>The NMMU brand creates high levels of awareness</td>
<td>-0.797</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Id9</td>
<td>The NMMU logo reflects the Brand identity</td>
<td>-0.779</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Id10</td>
<td>The NMMU slogan (‘For Tomorrow’) reflects the Brand identity</td>
<td>-0.8289</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Id11</td>
<td>The NMMU brand reflects transformation for equity</td>
<td>-0.7859</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Id12</td>
<td>The NMMU brand reflects transformation for fairness</td>
<td>-0.831</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Id13</td>
<td>The NMMU brand reflects respect for diversity</td>
<td>-0.758</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Id14</td>
<td>The NMMU brand reflects the people-centred orientation of the University</td>
<td>-0.797</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Id15</td>
<td>The NMMU brand strives to improve excellence in their academic programmes and the performance of their stakeholders</td>
<td>-0.775</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Expl. Var** 9.259

**Prp. Total** 0.617

*Eigenvalues

For the purpose of this study, *Brand identity* refers to a brand’s ability to reflect engagement with all stakeholders; the vision and mission of the HEI; strong values; the verbal expression of the institution; transformation for equity and fairness; respect for diversity and the logo and slogan reflect the Brand identity. Furthermore,
Brand identity refers to the brand’s ability to be differentiated from other institutions in the country, to create high levels of awareness, reflects the people-centred orientation of the institution and strives to improve the excellence in the institution’s academic programmes and the performance of its stakeholders.

Table 6.25: Summary for scale (Factor six – Brand identity)

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>72.740</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard deviation</td>
<td>15.806</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid N</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cronbach Alpha</td>
<td>0.953</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standardised Alpha</td>
<td>0.954</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average inter-item correlation</td>
<td>0.601</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.2.4.7 Brand image

Eight items were originally proposed to measure the construct Brand image, five of which satisfy the 0.75 critical cut-off value. Therefore only five factors (Im3, Im4, Im5, Im7 and Im8) loaded as expected. The items Im1, Im2 and Im6 with their factor loadings of 0.58, 0.70 and 0.74 respectively, did not load as expected and were below the critical value and was therefore excluded from the factor score (Table 6.26). The resulting items of the construct Brand image yielded a Cronbach Alpha value of 0.881 (Table 6.27). This estimate exceeded the recommended 0.70 cut-off (Hair et al. 2006), implying reliability for the items in the questionnaire measuring the construct Brand image.
Table 6.26: Factor seven – Brand image

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Factor loading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Im3</td>
<td>The NMMU brand leads to the fulfilment of the dreams and aspirations of me as a student</td>
<td>-0.761</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Im4</td>
<td>The NMMU brand reflects exceptional academic achievements</td>
<td>-0.812</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Im5</td>
<td>The NMMU brand reflects excellent service delivery</td>
<td>-0.787</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Im7</td>
<td>The NMMU brand is well recognised nationally</td>
<td>-0.809</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Im8</td>
<td>The NMMU brand is well recognised internationally</td>
<td>-0.852</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Expl. Var 4.596
Prp. Total 0.574

*Eigenvalues

For the purpose of this study, Brand image refers to the ability of a HEI brand to lead to the fulfilment of the dreams and aspirations of its students, reflects exceptional academic achievements and excellent service delivery as well as being nationally and internationally recognised.

Table 6.27: Summary for scale (Factor seven – Brand image)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>25.300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard deviation</td>
<td>6.274</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid N</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cronbach Alpha</td>
<td>0.881</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standardised Alpha</td>
<td>0.882</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average inter-item correlation</td>
<td>0.603</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6.2.5 QUASI-EXPERIMENTAL DESIGN ANALYSIS

Quasi-experimental design studies according to Machin, Campbell and Walters (2007:226) are those which compare the effect of a treatment on two groups, namely a control and an experimental group. In the quasi-experimental design, the allocation of the treatment is not random and hence is limited to the extent that systematic differences between the groups could adversely influence the results. As the sampled groups are pre-dominantly NMMU students with similar demographic profiles, this study argues that there is limited opportunity for systematic differences and thus it is assumed that the datasets are comparable.

The following section entails a discussion on the quasi-experimental design analysis of the obtained data by highlighting the \( p \)-values of each factor identified in this study. These \( p \)-values provide an indication of whether the factor is statistically significant or statistically insignificant. The results of the quasi-experimental design analysis are shown in Table 6.28 to Table 6.34.

6.2.5.1 Brand reputation

The results for the analysis of the variable Brand reputation are shown in Table 6.28. The row marked ‘R1*Like’ has a \( p \)-value of 0.257. A common level of statistical significance used in literature is 5% (Hair et al. 2006:174). Given that the \( p \)-value is greater than the level of significance, it is interpreted that there is insufficient statistical evidence to support the claim that there is a difference in mean responses between the ‘before’ and ‘after’ experimental groups (students who ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook). Despite the lack of significant statistical support for the claim that the mean response for the ‘like’ group increased from the ‘before’ to ‘after’ intervention when compared to the control group, the interaction graphic in Figure 6.1a illustrates that there is some evidence that the experimental group’s mean responses for Brand reputation improved with the intervention methods applied. Further reference to this noticeable increase based on the graphical results will follow after each variable has been discussed.
Table 6.28: Brand reputation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PNLb &amp; PNLa</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>Degr. of</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>2294.993</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2294.993</td>
<td>1068.685</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Like</td>
<td>0.064</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.064</td>
<td>0.030</td>
<td>0.863</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>92.342</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>2.147</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R1</td>
<td>0.245</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.245</td>
<td>0.778</td>
<td>0.383</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R1*Like</td>
<td>0.416</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.416</td>
<td>1.319</td>
<td>0.257</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>13.554</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>0.315</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.2.5.2 Brand relevance

Table 6.29 provides the results for the analysis of the variable Brand relevance. The row marked ‘R1*Like’ has a p-value of 0.028. Given that the p-value is less than the level of significance, it is interpreted that there is sufficient statistical evidence to support the claim that there is a difference in mean responses between the ‘before’ and ‘after’ experimental groups (students who ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook). To determine where the difference in the mean responses are, the researcher looked at the interaction graphic (Figure 6.1b), which indicates that the mean response for the ‘like’ group increased from the ‘before’ to ‘after’ intervention. This implies that the intervention (Facebook postings about the NMMU) had a positive influence on the mean response of the experimental group for the factor defined as Brand relevance.
### Table 6.29: Brand relevance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RLV &amp; RLVa</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>Degr. Of</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>2099.291</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2099.291</td>
<td>1168.603</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Like</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>0.975</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>77.246</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>0.315</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R1</td>
<td>0.589</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.589</td>
<td>1.541</td>
<td>0.221</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R1*Like</td>
<td>1.952</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.952</td>
<td>5.108</td>
<td>0.029</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.2.5.3 Brand personality

The results for the analysis of the variable *Brand personality* are shown in Table 6.30. The row marked ‘R1*Like’ has a *p*-value of 0.047. Given that the *p*-value is less than the level of significance, it is interpreted that there is sufficient statistical evidence to support the claim that there is a difference in mean responses between the ‘before’ and ‘after’ experimental groups (students who ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook). To determine where the difference in the mean responses are, the researcher looked at the interaction graphic (Figure 6.1c), which indicates that the mean response for the ‘like’ group increased from the ‘before’ to ‘after’ intervention. This implies that the intervention had a positive influence on the mean response of the experimental group for the factor defined as *Brand personality*. 
Table 6.30: Brand personality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PNLb &amp; PNLa</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>Degr. Of</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>2152.5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2152.5</td>
<td>1012.9</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Like</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>0.979</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>91.38</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>2.125</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R1</td>
<td>0.233</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.233</td>
<td>0.753</td>
<td>0.390</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R1*Like</td>
<td>1.300</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.300</td>
<td>4.196</td>
<td>0.047</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>13.32</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>0.310</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.2.5.4 Brand performance

Table 6.31 provides the results for the analysis of the variable Brand performance. The row marked ‘R1*Like’ has a p-value of 0.019. Given that the p-value is less than the level of significance, it is interpreted that there is sufficient statistical evidence to support the claim that there is a difference in mean responses between the ‘before’ and ‘after’ experimental groups (students who ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook). To determine where the difference in the mean responses are, the researcher looked at the interaction graphic (Figure 6.1d), which indicates that the mean response for the ‘like’ group increased from the ‘before’ to ‘after’ intervention. This implies that the intervention had a positive influence on the mean response of the experimental group for the factor defined as Brand performance.
Table 6.31: Brand performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PFM &amp; PFMa</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>Degr. of</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>2151.036</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2151.036</td>
<td>1012.317</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Like</td>
<td>1.028</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.028</td>
<td>0.484</td>
<td>0.490</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>91.369</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>2.125</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R1</td>
<td>0.207</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.207</td>
<td>0.720</td>
<td>0.401</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R1*Like</td>
<td>1.700</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.700</td>
<td>5.911</td>
<td>0.019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>12.364</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>0.288</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.2.5.5 Brand relationship

The results for the analysis of the variable Brand relationship are shown in Table 6.32. The row marked ‘R1*Like’ has a p-value of 0.242. Given that the p-value is greater than the level of significance, it is interpreted that there is insufficient statistical evidence to support the claim that there is a difference in mean responses between the ‘before’ and ‘after’ experimental groups (students who ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook). Despite the lack of significant statistical support for the claim that the mean response for the ‘like’ group increased from the ‘before’ to ‘after’ intervention when compared to the control group, the interaction graphic in Figure 6.1e illustrates that there is some evidence that the experimental group’s mean responses for Brand relationship improved with the intervention methods applied. Further reference to this noticeable increase based on the graphical results will follow after each variable has been discussed.
### Table 6.32: Brand relationship

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>Degr. of</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>2096.930</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2096.930</td>
<td>705.6445</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Like</td>
<td>0.940</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.940</td>
<td>0.3163</td>
<td>0.577</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>127.781</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>2.972</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R1</td>
<td>0.227</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.227</td>
<td>0.6600</td>
<td>0.421</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R1*Like</td>
<td>0.484</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.484</td>
<td>1.4059</td>
<td>0.242</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>14.805</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>0.344</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.2.5.6 Brand identity

Table 6.33 provides the results for the analysis of the variable *Brand identity*. The row marked ‘R1*Like’ has a p-value of 0.028. Given that the p-value is less than the level of significance, it is interpreted that there is sufficient statistical evidence to support the claim that there is a difference in mean responses between the *‘before’* and *‘after’* experimental groups (students who ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook). To determine where the difference in the mean responses are, the researcher looked at the interaction graphic (Figure 6.1f), which indicates that the mean response for the *‘like’* group increased from the *‘before’* to *‘after’* intervention. This implies that the intervention had a positive influence on the mean response of the experimental group for the factor defined as *Brand identity*. 
Table 6.33: Brand identity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ID &amp; Ida</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>Degr. of</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>2299.054</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2299.054</td>
<td>1203.224</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Like</td>
<td>0.031</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.031</td>
<td>0.016</td>
<td>0.899</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>82.162</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>1.911</td>
<td>0.177</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R1</td>
<td>0.131</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.131</td>
<td>0.744</td>
<td>0.393</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R1*Like</td>
<td>0.912</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.912</td>
<td>5.162</td>
<td>0.028</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.2.5.7 Brand image

The results for the analysis of the variable *Brand image* are shown in Table 6.34. The row marked ‘R1*Like’ has a p-value of 0.069. Given that the p-value is greater than the level of significance, it is interpreted that there is insufficient statistical evidence to support the claim that there is a difference in mean responses between the ‘before’ and ‘after’ experimental groups (students who ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook). However, the p-value is only marginally more than 5% and if the less restrictive significance level of 10% had been chosen (Hair et al. 2006:226) the interpretation would have supported the claim that the intervention had a positive influence on the experimental group’s mean response for the variable *Brand image* (Figure 6.1g).
Table 6.34: Brand image

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Im &amp; Ima</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>Degr. of</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>2257.459</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2257.459</td>
<td>1019.024</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Like</td>
<td>0.419</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.419</td>
<td>0.189</td>
<td>0.666</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>95.259</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>2.215</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R1</td>
<td>0.310</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.310</td>
<td>0.943</td>
<td>0.337</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R1*Like</td>
<td>1.137</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.137</td>
<td>3.455</td>
<td>0.069</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>14.152</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>0.329</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 6.1: Interaction graphs for the seven factors

Figure 6.1a: Brand reputation

Figure 6.1b: Brand relevance
In summary, seven variables were assessed to determine whether or not the interventions applied had a positive influence on the experimental group as compared to the control group. Four variables had statistically significant differences at the 5% level and a fifth was statistically significant at the 10% level. The direction of the differences is shown in the interaction graphs in Figure 6.1. The interesting observation from these seven plots is that in each case, for the experimental group, the mean response for the variable of interest shows an increase from the ‘before’ to ‘after’ intervention.

6.2.6 EMPIRICAL RESULTS OF MULTIPLE LINEAR REGRESSION ANALYSES

Multiple linear regression is used as a tool to predict a dependent variable based on several independent or explanatory variables (Cooper & Schindler 2007). This enables the simultaneous analysis of the effect of two or more independent variables on a single dependent variable (Han 2006:125). The coefficient of multiple determination ($R^2$) estimates the percentage (%) of the variation in the dependent variable that can be explained by the independent variables. The coefficient can range between 0 and 1. The regression coefficients for each independent variable can be used to show the relative contribution that each independent variable gives to the explanatory power of the equation, provided that the coefficient is found to be significant (Cooper & Schindler 2007:576-577).

The results of the regression analyses are shown in Table 6.35 to Table 6.39. Using only the data from the experimental design database ($N = 47$), regression analyses were done for both the control group (students who ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook) and the experimental group (registered and non-registered Facebook users). The results of the quasi-experimental analyses provides support for the claim that the marketing interventions (postings placed on the NMMU Facebook
page) improved the respondents’ mean responses to the variables assessed and therefore further reporting of results is limited to the experimental group (students who ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook) only. In addition, regression models were run for both the ‘before’ and ‘after’ responses of the experimental group (students who ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook) to determine whether or not the results changed after the interventions.

Multiple Regression models for Brand identity (dependent variable) on the five independent variables Brand reputation, Brand relevance, Brand personality, Brand performance and Brand relationship, are used to assess the linear relationship between the variables. The estimated results are given in the accompanying tables as are correlation matrices for interpretative support.

Table 6.35: Brand identity dependent on Brand reputation, Brand relevance, Brand personality, Brand performance and Brand relationship before interventions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ID (LB)</th>
<th>b</th>
<th>Std.Err.</th>
<th>t(11)</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>0.132</td>
<td>0.392</td>
<td>0.337</td>
<td>0.743</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PNL*</td>
<td>0.293</td>
<td>0.189</td>
<td>1.553</td>
<td>0.149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REP*</td>
<td>0.423</td>
<td>0.236</td>
<td>1.791</td>
<td>0.101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PFM*</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>0.223</td>
<td>0.006</td>
<td>0.995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RLV*</td>
<td>0.245</td>
<td>0.126</td>
<td>1.947</td>
<td>0.078</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RSH*</td>
<td>0.043</td>
<td>0.095</td>
<td>0.449</td>
<td>0.662</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* PNL = Brand personality; REP = Brand reputation; PFM = Brand performance; RLV = Brand relevance; RSH = Brand relationship

Table 6.36: Brand identity dependent on Brand reputation, Brand relevance, Brand personality, Brand performance and Brand relationship after interventions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ID (LA)</th>
<th>b</th>
<th>Std.Err.</th>
<th>t(11)</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>0.119</td>
<td>0.289</td>
<td>0.411</td>
<td>0.689</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The results in Table 6.35 and Table 6.36 give the p-values of the independent variables for the regression models. The results are noticeably different between the ‘before’ intervention and ‘after’ intervention data. The results ‘before’ intervention show that there is limited support for dependence between Brand identity and Brand relevance (p-value < 10%), whilst after intervention there is strong support for four of the five independent variables (p-value < 1%). These results lend credence to the claim that intervention has influenced the respondents opinions on the variables assessed. These interpretations are tempered by the correlation matrices in Table 6.37 and Table 6.38, shown below.

Table 6.37: The experimental group’s correlation matrix for Brand identity, Brand image, Brand reputation, Brand relevance, Brand personality, Brand performance and Brand relationship before intervention

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>PNL</th>
<th>ID</th>
<th>REP</th>
<th>PFM</th>
<th>RLV</th>
<th>IM</th>
<th>RSH</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PNL*</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>0.919</td>
<td>0.923</td>
<td>0.848</td>
<td>0.652</td>
<td>0.878</td>
<td>0.844</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ID*</td>
<td>0.919</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>0.956</td>
<td>0.918</td>
<td>0.809</td>
<td>0.924</td>
<td>0.840</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REP*</td>
<td>0.923</td>
<td>0.956</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>0.921</td>
<td>0.742</td>
<td>0.945</td>
<td>0.859</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PFM*</td>
<td>0.848</td>
<td>0.918</td>
<td>0.921</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>0.842</td>
<td>0.920</td>
<td>0.772</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RLV*</td>
<td>0.652</td>
<td>0.809</td>
<td>0.742</td>
<td>0.842</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>0.753</td>
<td>0.588</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IM*</td>
<td>0.878</td>
<td>0.924</td>
<td>0.945</td>
<td>0.920</td>
<td>0.753</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>0.891</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RSH*</td>
<td>0.844</td>
<td>0.840</td>
<td>0.859</td>
<td>0.772</td>
<td>0.588</td>
<td>0.891</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* PNL = Brand personality; ID = Brand identity; REP = Brand reputation; PFM = Brand performance; RLV = Brand relevance; IM = Brand image; RSH = Brand relationship
Table 6.38: The experimental group’s correlation matrix for Brand identity, Brand image, Brand reputation, Brand relevance, Brand personality, Brand performance and Brand relationship after intervention

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>PNLa</th>
<th>IDa</th>
<th>REPa</th>
<th>PFMa</th>
<th>RLVa</th>
<th>IMa</th>
<th>RSHa</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PNLa*</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>0.833</td>
<td>0.870</td>
<td>0.830</td>
<td>0.857</td>
<td>0.870</td>
<td>0.806</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Id a*</td>
<td>0.833</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>0.920</td>
<td>0.912</td>
<td>0.937</td>
<td>0.895</td>
<td>0.807</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REP a*</td>
<td>0.870</td>
<td>0.920</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>0.858</td>
<td>0.885</td>
<td>0.953</td>
<td>0.692</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PF Ma*</td>
<td>0.830</td>
<td>0.912</td>
<td>0.858</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>0.886</td>
<td>0.899</td>
<td>0.652</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RLV a*</td>
<td>0.857</td>
<td>0.937</td>
<td>0.885</td>
<td>0.886</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>0.845</td>
<td>0.757</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IM a*</td>
<td>0.870</td>
<td>0.895</td>
<td>0.953</td>
<td>0.899</td>
<td>0.845</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>0.649</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RSH a*</td>
<td>0.806</td>
<td>0.807</td>
<td>0.692</td>
<td>0.652</td>
<td>0.757</td>
<td>0.649</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* PNL = Brand personality; ID = Brand identity; REP = Brand reputation; PF = Brand performance; RLV = Brand relevance; IM = Brand image; RSH = Brand relationship
The correlation matrices, with significant correlations shown in red, indicate strong correlation between all variables, both ‘before’ and ‘after’ intervention. This is a strong indication of evidence of multicollinearity and as emphasised before, adversely affects the significance of independent variables used in the regression model. It is quite plausible that the differences observed in the regression outputs are a result of multicollinearity thereby limiting the generalisation of this study’s findings.

Simple regression models for Brand image dependent on Brand identity are used to assess the linear relationship between the variables. The estimated results are given in the accompanying tables.

**Table 6.39: The experimental group’s regression summary for Brand image dependent on Brand identity before intervention**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IM (LB)</th>
<th>b</th>
<th>Std.Err.</th>
<th>t(15)</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>-0.107</td>
<td>0.561</td>
<td>-0.191</td>
<td>0.851</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ID</td>
<td>1.015</td>
<td>0.108</td>
<td>9.377</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 6.40: The experimental group’s regression summary for Brand image dependent on Brand identity after intervention**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IM (LA)</th>
<th>b</th>
<th>Std.Err.</th>
<th>t(15)</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>0.788</td>
<td>0.603</td>
<td>1.306</td>
<td>0.211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ID</td>
<td>0.860</td>
<td>0.112</td>
<td>7.778</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results in Table 6.39 and Table 6.40 give the p-values of the independent variables for the regression models. The results are similar for both the ‘before’
intervention and ‘after’ intervention data. The results show that there is strong support for dependence between Brand image and Brand identity (p-value < 1%). These results lend credence to the claim that Brand image is dependent on Brand identity. In this case, the correlation matrices in Table 6.37 and Table 6.38 are irrelevant as there is only one independent variable and multicollinearity is no longer a problem.

In summary, considering the quasi-experimental and regression findings simultaneously, there is statistical support, for the claim that the interventions used throughout this study improved respondents views and perceptions of the Brand image of the NMMU in terms of its Brand reputation, Brand relevance, Brand personality, Brand performance and Brand relationship. There is also statistical evidence (either at 5 or 10% significance) to support the hypotheses in Table 6.41, albeit for the experimental group (students who ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook) after intervention.

Table 6.41 provides an indication as to which hypotheses were accepted and which ones where rejected during the analysis of the empirical results.

**Table 6.41: Hypotheses**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypotheses</th>
<th>Accept/Reject</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H³</td>
<td>There is a positive relationship between Brand identity and Brand image. Accept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H²</td>
<td>There is a positive relationship between Brand reputation and Brand identity. Accept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H³</td>
<td>There is a positive relationship between Brand relevance and Brand identity. Accept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H⁴</td>
<td>There is a positive relationship between Brand personality and Brand identity. Accept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H⁵</td>
<td>There is a positive relationship between Brand performance and Brand identity. Accept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H⁶</td>
<td>There is a positive relationship between Brand performance and Brand identity. Accept</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Given the observation of the impact that the interventions had on the experimental group (students who ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook) and the supporting statistical hypotheses results, there is much evidence to support the theory that the interventions applied throughout this study had a positive effect on the experimental group’s responses. Furthermore, the empirical findings provide sufficient support for the relationships identified and hypothesized in Figure 1.1. These findings illustrate that the independent variables (Brand reputation, Brand relevance, Brand personality, Brand performance and Brand relationship) does indeed have an impact on the Brand image (dependent variable) of a HEI (Figure 6.2).

Figure 6.2: Proposed hypothesised model: The impact of Brand identity variables on the Brand image of a Higher Education Institution (HEI)
6.2.7 DISCUSSION ON FACEBOOK INSIGHTS

It is important to note that this section on the discussion about the NMMU Facebook page does not only included information relating to the respondents who participated in this study, but rather of all the individuals who ‘like’ the NMMU Facebook page. Facebook Insights data cannot provide a breakdown of information relating only to the respondents of the experimental group that participated in the study. The justification for discussing these results is to provide the reader with insight into the functioning of the NMMU Facebook page during the period in which the Facebook data collection process of this study were conducted (13 September 2011 to 13 October 2011) (Annexure H).

6.2.7.1 Overview of the NMMU Facebook page

The researcher extracted data relating to the NMMU Facebook page from Facebook Insights for the period from 13 September 2011 to 13 October 2011, the period
during which the postings were placed on the NMMU Facebook page (Annexure C). These postings were only shared with the experimental group who ‘like’ the NMMU Facebook page. As was discussed earlier, the aim of these postings is to enhance perceptions and views of the experimental group about the Brand image of the NMMU. During the month of the postings the NMMU Facebook page obtained 239 new likes for the page, bringing the total number of people who ‘like’ the NMMU Facebook page to 2089 (also referred to as lifetime likes). Facebook Insights also provides information with regards to the daily, weekly and monthly active users on the NMMU Facebook page as indicated in Figure 6.2 (Annexure G) (Facebook Insights 2011).

**Figure 6.2: Active users**

![Active users graph](image)

**Source:** Facebook Insights (2011).

Figure 6.3 provides an indication of the number of new likes and unlikes on the NMMU Facebook page for the period September 2011 to 13 October 2011. Furthermore, this figure also provides the main sources from which likes are obtained, namely unknown sources, user profiles, searches, requests and suggestions (Annexure G) (Facebook Insights 2011).

**Figure 6.3: Likes and unlikes**
In terms of activity taking place on the NMMU Facebook page, Figure 6.4 provides numbers on the amount of page views as well as the number of unique page views (page viewed by unique users). From Figure 6.4 it is evident that the unique page views fluctuate between 0 to 500 views on a daily basis. The page views however fluctuate from below 500 to over 1500 page views daily (Annexure G) (Facebook Insights 2011).

**Figure 6.4: Page views**

Figure 6.5 provides a further breakdown on the daily active users by indicating the number of unique views of the NMMU Facebook page, the post viewers, the number of individuals who liked a post placed on the page, the number of individuals who commented on a post placed on the NMMU page and the number of wall post made by individuals on the NMMU Facebook page (Annexure G) (Facebook Insights 2011).
Figure 6.5: Daily active users breakdown

Source: Facebook Insights (2011).

6.2.7.2 Interactions

The interactions section of the discussion on the NMMU Facebook page results can be broken down into three areas, namely the post views, post feedbacks as well as page content feedback.

Post views refers to the number of times that a post or news feed story made by the NMMU Facebook page was viewed by individuals. These numbers also include the people who ‘like’ the post or news feed story as well as those that ‘did not like’ the post or news feed story. For the period 13 September 2011 to 13 October 2011 the post views on the NMMU Facebook page were 172 987. Compared to the period 13 August 2011 to 12 September 2011 (prior month) there was a 145% increase in the amount of post views (Annexure G) (Facebook Insights 2011).

Post feedback refers to the number of comments left of likes from individuals on posts of news feed stories posted by the NMMU Facebook page. For the period 13 September 2011 to 13 October 2011 the post feedbacks on the NMMU Facebook page were 1139, which indicated a 43% increase in post feedbacks as compared to the period 13 August 2011 to 12 September 2011 (prior month) (Annexure G) (Facebook Insights 2011).

In terms of page content feedback, Figure 6.6 provides an indication of the number of likes and comments received by the NMMU Facebook page on its posts and news
feed stories posted on the page for the period 13 September 2011 to 13 October 2011.

Figure 6.6: Page content feedback

[Graph showing likes and comments over time]

Source: Facebook Insights (2011).

6.2.7.3 Demographics of NMMU Facebook page users in general

The data extracted from Facebook Insights provided data on the gender and age of the 3089 individuals who ‘like’ the NMMU Facebook page. From Figure 6.7 it can be seen that the majority of the individuals who ‘like’ the NMMU Facebook page are between the age group 18 to 24. Thirty three percent (33%) of the total number (3089) likes are females between the ages of 18 to 24, while thirty two percent (32%) of the total number (3089) likes are males between the ages of 18 to 24. The age group with the lowest number of individuals who ‘like’ the NMMU Facebook page, for both males and females, fall within the age group 45 to 54. Within this age group one point seven percent (1.7%) females and one point one percent (1.1%) males of the total number of individuals (3089) ‘like’ the NMMU Facebook page (Annexure G) (Facebook Insights 2011).

Figure 6.7: Demographic information of the individuals who ‘like’ the NMMU Facebook page
Furthermore, Figure 6.7 provides information on which countries the various fans of the NMMU Facebook page come from, the towns/cities that the individuals comes from as well as the language indicated or used by the individuals who ‘like’ the NMMU Facebook page. The language indicated on Figure 6.7 does not necessarily indicate the home language of the individual users; as users can choose which language format they prefer when logging into their Facebook profiles, which can differ from their native language (Annexure G) (Facebook Insights 2011).

Therefore, it can be inferred that the majority of the individuals who ‘like’ the NMMU Facebook page are from South Africa (2456), while the majority of the users are also from the city Port Elizabeth (situated within the Eastern Cape, South Africa – 1083). The majority (2200) of the total number of users utilises the English (US) language as the input and usage language for their Facebook profile (Annexure G) (Facebook Insights 2011).

6.2.7.4 Media consumption
The NMMU’s Facebook page allows the institution to upload videos, audio clips as well as photos. Figure 6.8 provides an indication of the ways in which the users interacted with the media uploaded by the institution. From Figure 6.7 it can be inferred that the users viewed the photos uploaded by the institution on a daily basis with an increase in the amount of photo viewing between 19 September 2011 and 22 September 2011. During the period of 19 September 2011 and 22 September 2011 the users also engage with the NMMU Facebook page by listening to the audio files on the institution’s page (Annexure G) (Facebook Insights 2011).

**Figure 6.8: Media consumption**

![Media consumption chart]

*Source: Facebook Insights (2011).*

**6.2.7.5 Additional information**

When creating a Facebook page, an institution provides information in general and about the institution in the form of tabs, located in the left hand column of the Facebook page. Example of these tabs created by NMMU on their Facebook page includes the ‘Wall’ tab, the ‘Photos’ tab, the ‘About Us’ tab, the ‘Dept Links’ tabs, the ‘Questions’ tab and the ‘Information’ tab. Table 6.42 provides a summary of the total number of times a particular tab has been viewed by the individuals who ‘like’ the NMMU Facebook page. For the period 13 September 2011 to 13 October 2011 the NMMU Wall has been viewed a total number of 28 094 times, its photo albums and photos have been viewed 240 times, while the ‘About Us’ tab providing information on the institution and the ‘Dept Links’ tab providing access to the departments’ Facebook pages have been viewed 113 and 101 times, respectively (Annexure G) (Facebook Insights 2011).
Table 6.42: Total tab views for the NMMU Facebook page from 13 September 2011 to 13 October 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of views</th>
<th>Tab</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>28 094</td>
<td>Wall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>240</td>
<td>Photos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>157</td>
<td>Static HTML: iframe tabs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>113</td>
<td>About Us</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>101</td>
<td>Dept Links</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81</td>
<td>Questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63</td>
<td>Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59</td>
<td>Notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Friendactivity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Adapted from Facebook Insights (2011).

6.8 SUMMARY

The empirical results of the study were presented in Chapter 6. A detailed discussion of the demographics information pertaining to the respondents and their Facebook usage were presented and discussed. The validity and reliability of the measuring instrument used in this study were assessed and reported on. Six factors (Brand reputation, Brand relevance, Brand personality, Brand performance, Brand relationship and Brand identity) have been identified as having a potential impact on Brand image of a HEI, as illustrated in (Figure 4.1).
The data was exposed to linear regression analysis in order to determine whether significant relationship exist between the identified factors and *Brand identity* and *Brand image*.

In Chapter 7, a summary of the study will be presented and will be followed by an interpretation of the empirical results in Chapter 6. Significant emphasis will be placed on the implications and recommendations for HEI with regards to *Brand image*, *Brand identity and the Brand identity variables*, namely *Brand reputation*, *Brand relevance*, *Brand personality*, *Brand performance* and *Brand relationship*. The chapter will be concluded with the contributions and limitations of the study as well as recommendations for future research.
CHAPTER 7

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter 6, the empirical findings of the study were discussed and reported on and the validity and reliability of the research instruments used for the purpose of the study were discussed. The findings of the hypothesised model and the hypotheses that were identified at the beginning of the study, which were subjected to empirical testing, were also presented and discussed.

Chapter 7, the final chapter of this study, comprises of a summary of the study as well as a discussion of the most significant findings. An explanation of these findings, as well as their implications for Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) will be highlighted. Based on the empirical findings of this study, recommendations will then be suggested. The chapter will be concluded with a discussion of the contributions and limitations of this study and recommendations for future research areas will be suggested.

7.2 OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH

Over the past decade, there has been an increasing level of enthusiasm for the fundamental role that the Internet can play within Higher Education, not least as a means of presenting students with ready access to educational prospects (Selwyn 2008:11). In particular, the Internet has been positioned by universities’ organised efforts to provide students access to the information required for their studies and to deliver subject content (Selwyn 2008:11). Selwyn (2008:12) states that the current group of undergraduate students are said to be drawn from the first generation of
‘digital natives’, who grew up with the Internet and as a result are totally comfortable to utilise online sources in order to satisfy their information needs.

Therefore, the focus of this study was firstly to determine how a range of branding elements, amongst others, *Brand reputation, Brand relevance, Brand personality, Brand performance* and *Brand relationship*, influence the *Brand image* of a HEI through the use of social media. The main aim was to make recommendations that will assist HEIs to effectively utilise social media to improve its Brand image. The empirical part of the research focused on determining whether the use of social media will influence the perceptions that students have about the Brand image of a HEI. Firstly, a questionnaire was given to a control group (registered and non-registered Facebook users) and the experimental group (students who ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook) to complete in order to determine the views and perceptions that they had about the university before being influenced by any form of information or intervention. A quasi-experimental design study was then employed, which focused on comparing the effects of a treatment on two groups, a control group (registered and non-registered Facebook users) and an experimental group (students who ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook). The treatment utilised in this study were the postings that was made on the NMMU Facebook page during the period of 13 September 2011 to 13 October 2011. Only the experimental group was exposed to these Facebook postings. Throughout the entire intervention through Facebook, the control group was never exposed to any information about the university. After the Facebook postings was made, both the control group and the experimental group was given a second questionnaire to complete in order to determine if the views and perceptions on the Brand image from the control group’s point of view stayed the same and whether the experimental group’s views and perceptions on the institution’s Brand image improved. From the statistical results it can be inferred that there was in fact an improvement in the experimental group’s views and perceptions. Secondly, the focus of this study was to expand on the current limited knowledge and information available relating to the use of social media by HEIs to improve their Brand image.

Considering the purpose of this study, the primary objective of this research was twofold: Firstly, to design and follow a relatively new methodology to establish
whether the use of social media has any impact on how the Brand image of a HEI is perceived and enhanced. Secondly, to evaluate and empirically test the impact of selected branding elements on the Brand image of a HEI, through the use of social media, as well as to make recommendations in order to successfully utilise these branding elements when marketing a HEI.

To help achieve the primary objective of this study, the following secondary objectives were formulated:

a) To embark on an in-depth theoretical study on:
   - Branding and the various branding elements involved in branding a HEI; and
   - The impact that social networking sites have on the Brand image of a HEI.

b) To propose a hypothesised model identifying branding elements that will have an impact on the Brand image of a HEI.

c) To undertake an empirical investigation to test the influence of selected independent variables on the perceived Brand image of the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University as the sample of this study through the intervention of social media. This empirical investigation will include investigating what research paradigm, data collection method and data analysis method will be utilised and deemed most appropriate to investigate the research problem at hand.

d) To suggest recommendations that could aid HEIs' marketers to successfully brand their universities through the use of social media.

An extensive literature study was conducted and discussed in Chapters 2, 3 and 4. The literature research was conducted to acquire as much secondary information as possible with regards to social media, social networking sites and the use of social media by HEIs. Chapter 2 therefore focused on obtaining a relevant definition of social media and social networking sites, which can be used in this study. The chapter also highlighted the structure and evolution of the Internet as well as the nature and importance of social media. Throughout this discussion the following topics were covered, namely the growth and popularity thereof, the impact it has, the types of social networking sites, the steps in using social media as well as the classification of social network users. Furthermore, the uses and functions of social
media, the advantages and disadvantages of social media as well as the recommendations for the successful use of social media were discussed. In this chapter the use of social media by HEIs were also investigated and provide information on the use of social media as a marketing and communication tool. The concerns that HEIs face when utilising social media were elaborated on. Certain ethical and legal considerations needs to be adhere to when using social media marketing and these were discussed within this chapter. The chapter was concluded by introducing the social networking site that was used to accomplish the primary objective of the study, namely Facebook. The various features and dimensions of Facebook, as well as the use of Facebook by HEIs and its students, were also discussed.

Chapter 3 commenced with an introduction to branding, the five Brand identity variables as well as the impact that they have on Brand image. The nature and importance of branding in general, as well as its role in HEIs were described and discussed. The five core Brand identity variables (Brand reputation, Brand relevance, Brand personality, Brand performance, Brand relationship) and their relevant attributes included in this study was discussed, as well as their influence on the Brand image of a HEI.

In Chapter 4 the hypothesised model was introduced with Brand image as the dependent variable, Brand identity is the intervening variable and the five core Brand identity variables, namely Brand reputation, Brand relevance, Brand personality, Brand performance as well as the Brand relationship as the independent variables. Anecdotal, editorial and empirical evidence from the branding literature were presented as support for the relationships hypothesised between the five independent variables and intervening and dependent variables. In total six relationships were hypothesised from the abovementioned factors. Therefore, the first and second secondary objectives on this study were achieved.

The research design and methodology of this study was discussed in Chapter 5. As the purpose of this study was to identify the impact of social media on social networking site (SNS) like Facebook has on the Brand image of a HEI, the positivistic (quantitative) research paradigm was selected as the most applicable
research paradigm for this study. This research paradigm was applicable because this study made use of a large sample and therefore research was conducted through the use of a questionnaire. The students participating in this study were selected by utilising a non-probability sampling technique, namely convenience sampling. Two sample groups were included in this study, namely a control group (registered and non-registered Facebook users) and an experimental group (students who ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook). In order to obtain the potential respondents form the sample group, the students were initially approached personally in class, via their student email accounts and via Facebook to ascertain whether they are willing to participate in the study. This procedure of identifying the respondents took place over a period of three months. The sample group therefore consisted of 348 NMMU undergraduate and post graduate students who either ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook or students that may or may not have a Facebook profile, but who is not allowed to ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook (registered and non-registered Facebook users).

The empirical results of this study were presented in Chapter 6. The process of collecting the empirical data for the study comprised of three phases. The first phase of data collection included the sending out of questionnaires for completion to the 348 students in both sample groups. Of the 348 self-administered questionnaires sent out, 98 usable questionnaires were completed and returned. The second phase of data collection comprised of Facebook postings being made 2 – 5 times daily for a period of one month from 13 September 2011 to 13 October 2011. During the experiment, the researcher was able to measure the effect that this content intervention had on students. The researcher made use of the statistical tools that the Facebook platform offers to test responses to any intervention by means of impressions, comments, feedback and likes. The third phase of data collection included the sending out of a second round of questionnaires to the 98 respondents in the two sample groups who completed the questionnaires in the first phase of data collection. Of the 98 self-administered questionnaires sent out, 47 usable questionnaires were completed and returned. The data collected from the questionnaires were subject to a variety of statistical techniques and analyses, such as exploratory factor analysis, Cronbach Alpha coefficient analysis, quasi-experimental design analyses and Multiple linear regression. Due to these activities
of data collection and statistical analyses, the third secondary objective of this study was achieved.

An exploratory factor analysis was conducted to confirm the discriminant validity of the factors in the hypothesised model. Of the five original independent variables, all five of factors loaded as expected, namely Brand reputation, Brand relevance, Brand personality, Brand performance as well as the Brand relationship. The original intervening variable, Brand identity and the dependent variable, Brand image both loaded as expected.

In order to determine the reliability of the measuring instrument a Cronbach Alpha coefficient was calculated for each factor. The Cronbach Alpha coefficients reported for all the factors identified in the study were higher than the 0.70 cut-off value. It is therefore suggested that the scales utilised in this study were reliable.

The last objective of this study, the offering of recommendations that will assist marketers of HEIs to successfully market their institutions and consequently improve the Brand image of the HEI is achieved in this chapter. This is accomplished by providing recommendations to HEIs based on the results acquired during the empirical investigation.

In conclusion, the secondary objectives indentified for the study were accomplished, meaning that the primary objective of the study was also attained.

7.3 INTERPRETATIONS OF THE EMPIRICAL RESULTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In Chapter 6, a number of factors were reported as having an important impact on Brand image of a HEI. Each one of the significant relationships will be interpreted, and recommendations will be made to HEIs with regards to these relationships.

7.3.1 DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION OF THE RESPONDENTS
In this study, various demographic factors relating to the control group (registered and non-registered Facebook users) and the experimental group (students who ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook) were analysed, namely whether they are registered Facebook users, whether they ‘like’ or ‘do not like’ the NMMU Facebook page, their reasons for liking or not liking the NMMU Facebook page, age, gender, level of qualification, whether they are full-time or part-time students, the faculty in which they study as well as the campus on which most of their contact sessions are taking place. A number of factors relating to the respondents’ Facebook usage, namely the frequency of usage, from where they access Facebook, social networking sites on which they have a personal profile, time spend on social networking sites, their purpose for logging in as well as the number of friends they have on Facebook.

In Chapter 7 only the main demographic results for the second phase of data collection was discussed as the data analyses such as the factor analysis, Multiple linear regression, Cronbach Alpha coefficients and quasi-experimental design analysis was only conducted on the data of the respondents who completed the second phase of data collection when the questionnaires were sent out.

7.3.1.1 Demographic information pertaining to the control group (registered and non-registered facebook users) – Section B and C second phase

During the second phase of sending out the questionnaire the following information was obtained. The majority of the respondents (53.6%) in the control group (registered and non-registered Facebook users) were between the ages of 21 and 25. From the respondents included in the study, most of them were females (53.6%). Of the 28 respondents that were included in the sample for the control group (registered and non-registered Facebook users) in this second phase of the study, the majority of the respondents (71.4%) are undergraduate students at the NMMU. The majority of the respondents (89.3%) indicated that they are full-time students. Furthermore, the majority (57.1%) of the respondents indicated that they study in the Business and Economic Sciences Faculty. From the data analysis it was also found that the majority of the respondents (71.4%) had their contact sessions at the South campus of the NMMU.
Eleven (39.3%) of the 28 control group respondents indicated that they log onto Facebook once a day. From the 28 respondents included in the control group (registered and non-registered Facebook users) sample, which participated in this phase of the study, 22 respondents (78.6%) specified that they access Facebook via their mobile phones. The majority of the respondents (96.4%) to the study indicated that they have a profile on the SNS Facebook. Nine (32.1%) of the respondents highlighted that they spend between five and 10 minutes on a SNS when logged onto the site. From the responses it is evident that the majority of the respondents (89.3%) mainly utilises Facebook to keep in contact with their friends and family. The majority of the respondents (25.0%) indicated that they have between 301 and 400 friends on Facebook.

7.3.1.2 Demographic information pertaining to the experimental group (students who ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook) – Section B and C second phase

The majority of the respondents (73.7%) included in the experimental group (students who ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook were between the ages of 21 and 25. The majority of the respondent in this phase of the study were females (63.2%). Of the 19 respondents that were included in the sample for the experimental group (students who ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook) in this second phase of the study, the majority of the respondents (84.2%) are undergraduate students at the NMMU. All the respondents (100.0%) indicated that they are full-time students. The majority of the respondents studies in the Business and Economic Sciences Faculty, namely 36.8%. From the data analysis it was also found that the majority of the respondents (63.2%) had their contact sessions at the South campus of the NMMU.

Of the 19 respondents in the experimental group, the majority of the respondents (52.6%) indicated that they log onto Facebook more than once a day. From the 19 respondents included in the experimental group (students who ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook) sample, which participated in this phase of the study, 18 respondents (94.7%) specified that they access Facebook via their mobile phones. All 19 of the respondents (100.0%) to the study indicated that they have a profile on the SNS Facebook. Eight (42.1%) of the 19 experimental group respondents indicated that they spend between five and 10 minutes on a SNS when logged onto the site, while
a further eight (42.1%) indicated that they spend between 11 and 30 minutes on a SNS when logged onto the site. This indicates that there were an equal number of responses in the two response categories. From the responses it is evident that the majority of the respondents (47.4%) mainly utilises Facebook to keep in contact with their friends and family. Five of the experimental group respondents (26.3%) indicated that they have between 201 and 300 friends on Facebook, while a further five of the respondents (26.3%) indicated that they have more than 500 friends on Facebook. This indicates that there were an equal number of responses in the two response categories.

7.3.2 BRAND IDENTITY AND BRAND IMAGE

In this study, Brand identity had a significant positive influence on the Brand image of a HEI. HEIs that are characterised as having a positive and strong Brand identity have a greater likelihood of having an enhanced Brand image. The impact that Brand identity has in enhancing the Brand image of a HEI has a significant positive correlation to Brand image.

HEI can focus on enhancing the Brand identity by ensuring that the brand:

- reflect engagement with all stakeholders;
- reflect the vision and mission of the HEI;
- reflect strong values;
- reflect the verbal expression of the institution, the logo and slogan reflect the Brand identity;
- reflect transformation for equity;
- reflect transformation for fairness;
- reflect respect for diversity;
- is differentiated from other institutions in the country;
- create high levels of awareness;
- reflects the people-centred orientation of the institution; and
- strives to improve the excellence in the institution’s academic programmes and the performance of its stakeholders.
Furthermore, it is recommended that HEI should ensure the following in order to create and possess an enhanced *Brand image*. The brand must have the ability to:

- lead to the fulfilment of the dreams and aspirations of its students;
- reflect exceptional academic achievements;
- reflect excellent service delivery;
- be nationally recognised; and
- be internationally recognised.

As *Brand identity* positively influences *Brand image*, *Brand identity* can assist in enhancing and improving the *Brand image* of a HEI to ensure that the institution’s students positively perceive the institution’s image. Enhanced and effective *Brand identity* also contributes to ensuring that an institution has a positive image as viewed by its students. Furthermore, *Brand image* contribute to enhancing the brand loyalty of an institution’s students.

### 7.3.3 BRAND REPUTATION

*Brand reputation* can be seen as playing a pivotal role in enhancing the *Brand image* of a HEI as it directly impacts on *Brand image* and brand commitment. *Brand reputation* includes characteristics that contributes to a positive reputation being built for an institution and includes the following characteristics, namely trustworthiness; reliability; honesty; heritage, legacy and traditions; clarity of messages; consistency and credibility. The degree to which *Brand reputation* has the ability to meet these needs and expectations of its various stakeholders has a significant positive correlation to the *Brand image* of a HEI.

It is recommended that HEIs and in this case, the NMMU, should focus on obtaining the right *Brand reputation* in their institutions by creating a brand that is:

- legitimate;
- advertised in a credible manner;
- communicated in an honest manner;
- communicated clearly;
- communicated in a consistent manner;
- reliable;
reflects pride (including heritage, legacy and traditions); and
create high levels of confidence with its stakeholders.

7.3.4 BRAND RELEVANCE

The degree to which *Brand relevance* of a HEI has the ability to meet the educational needs of their stakeholders by being innovative, reflecting the academic values valued by stakeholders and be well accepted by its stakeholders has a significant positive correlation to the *Brand image* of a HEI. *Brand relevance* can be therefore regarded as how well the NMMU brand is communicated to its students in terms of the needs they have.

A HEI and NMMU in particular should therefore be allowed to:
- meet stakeholders’ educational needs;
- be innovative;
- reflects academic value in line with stakeholders’ needs; and
- be well accepted by its stakeholders.

In order to create a good *Brand image* for a HEI, in this case the NMMU, through *Brand relevance*, the institution needs to focus on the needs-values fit of the brand, the meaning fit of the brand, the inventiveness and the uniqueness of the institution’s brand, whether the academic values are in harmony with stakeholders’ needs and if the brand is well-liked by its stakeholders.

7.3.5 BRAND PERSONALITY

*Brand personality* has been identified as a set of human characteristics associated with a brand and these characteristics include sincerity, excitement, competence, sophistication and ruggedness. The degree to which *Brand personality* assists in creating an affluent competitive advantage for a brand, has a significant positive correlation to the *Brand image* of a HEI.
It is recommended that a HEI and in this case, the NMMU, should focus on placing emphasis on the *Brand personality* of the institution to enable its students to relate to the brand. *Brand personality* refers to a brand that is:

- competent;
- sophisticated; and
- superior to competition.

### 7.3.6 BRAND PERFORMANCE

*Brand performance* is the ability of a brand to exceed customers’ expectations of a brand, to deliver on its promises, deliver tangible benefits and value for money. The degree to which a brand is able to meet the expectations and experiences of its students has a significant positive correlation to the *Brand image* of a HEI.

HEIs and in this case, the NMMU, should focus on developing a brand with exceptional performance in order to meet the needs and expectations of its students and in order to be effective, it should:

- delivers on its promises;
- reflects good value for money;
- exceeds the expectations in terms of its promises;
- performs well in terms of the stakeholders’ expectations;
- provides high quality academic programmes; and
- delivers academic services on time.

### 7.3.7 BRAND RELATIONSHIP

*Brand relationship* has five dimensions or attributes, namely knowledge and awareness of customer needs; customers’ long-time commitment; what customers deem to be important; customers should experience the product as being pleasurable to use and the probability of non-usage. The degree to which a brand of a HEI is able to form such a relationship and satisfy the needs and expectations of its students has a significant positive correlation to the *Brand image* of the institution.
For a HEI and in this case, the NMMU, to create a good relationship with its students and create a good Brand image, the institution’s brand should:

- be preferred above those of other HEIs;
- makes students feel part of the institution; and
- the Brand identity is strongly established in the minds of its stakeholders.

7.4 CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY

This study has added to the body of knowledge about social media, its use by HEIs, as well as how various Brand identity variables could impact on the Brand image of a HEI. The study of Brand image and the use of social media by HEIs to improve their Brand image have been largely disregarded in the field of HEI research.

The primary objective of this research was twofold: Firstly, to design and follow a relatively new methodology to establish whether the use of social media has any impact on how the Brand image of a HEI is perceived and enhanced. Secondly, the impact of selected branding elements on the Brand image of a HEI was empirically tested. Recommendations were made on how HEIs could utilise various Brand identity variables, through the use of social media to improve its Brand image. It was an extremely difficult task as a researcher to identifying the needed elements that will accurately contribute to achieving the stated objectives of this study and in developing the new research methodology. Although it did become stressful and difficult at times the first primary objective was nonetheless achieved. This research therefore made a significant contribution to the field of social media as well as branding research through the development of an entirely new form of research methodology that investigated the impact that social media have on the Brand image of a HEI. The contribution of this study was further enhanced by meticulously documenting the whole process that was followed for future research that could make use of this methodology as a basis to conduct research on social media usage in HEIs.
Furthermore, the results of the Multiple linear regression results for the experimental group (students who ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook) indicated a noticeable difference between the ‘before’ intervention and ‘after’ intervention data. This indicated that the intervention through Facebook (posting on the NMMU Facebook page about the institution) and the use of social media indeed had a positive influence on the experimental group’s respondents and contributed to these respondents having enhanced views and perceptions about the NMMU brand. These results also contributed to the researcher being able to accept all six formulated hypotheses (Table 6.41). Based on these findings the second primary objective was achieved.

Furthermore, the hypothesised model developed in this study has made a contribution towards the understanding of the impact that various Brand identity variables have on the Brand image of a HEI through the use of social media. In conclusion, the study offered suggestions and recommendations that could assist the marketers of HEIs in using social media effectively and to their advantage, which will result in the improved Brand image of their HEIs.

7.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

A limitation faced by the researcher in this study was the low response rate of the respondents to the study in the first phase of data collection. After numerous attempts and emails to motivate and entice students to complete the questionnaire and participate in the study, the response rate were however still very low. As explained earlier only 98 useable questionnaires were completed and returned from the 348 self-administered questionnaires sent out to respondents for completion. It can therefore be recommended for future research that researchers should focus on developing and researching new or alternative method by which they can motivate students to more actively and enthusiastically complete the questionnaires.

Another limitation experienced by the researcher was that to the knowledge of the researching team it was the first study of its nature to be conducted in South Africa and therefore difficulty was experienced in developing the appropriate research
methodology to implement the research and data collection. It is therefore recommended that future research can utilise the proposed and developed research methodology and develop new ways of implementing or improving the research methodology.

Furthermore, another limiting factor of the study is that the research focused on the five Brand identity variables and how they impact the Brand image of a HEI through the use of social media. With the focus of this study only being on HEIs, future studies should also focus on broadening the research by focusing on the impact that these Brand identity variables and the use of social media have on businesses.

The data obtained from the questionnaire responses were a limiting factor and restricted the generalisation of the results for this study. To run the exploratory factor analysis (EFA), it was necessary to utilise simple imputation methods to provide sufficient data to define the factors used in the study. The missing values in the responses to the group categorised as ‘don’t like before’ (DLB) were imputed using modal replacement. In the cases of ties, the modal values closest to the mean values were imputed. There were only 51 respondents in this group, with 50 usable questionnaires after imputation. Of the four possible groups, this was the largest number of respondents, hence it was by necessity the group selected for the EFA.

Even though various limitations were encountered during this study, the findings of this study make a considerable contribution to the existing body of knowledge of HEIs, branding, Brand identity and Brand image research.

By identifying the various limitations of the study and making recommendations for future the last secondary research objective, namely to suggest recommendations that could aid HEIs’ marketers to successfully brand their universities through the use of social media were achieved.

7.6 FINAL CONCLUSIONS

Social media has not only changed the way in which businesses and their brands interact with one another and how they interact with their customers, it has also
brought changes to the way in which business get done (Botha et al. 2011:44). The use of social media by a HEI offers the institution the opportunity to humanise stories of the institution, the students and the alumni. Through the usage of social media it can lead to the creation of loyalty, the earning of future business in the form of new students and ultimately their respect. (Reuben 2008:11; Solis 2008).

The success of the marketing and branding of HEIs is therefore of fundamental importance. To ensure this success, HEI’s marketing communicators should devote sufficient time and energy to the various branding elements (Brand reputation, Brand relevance, Brand personality, Brand performance and Brand relationship) when marketing and branding their institutions.

From this study it is apparent that HEIs recognise the importance of paying attention to the various branding elements, Brand identity and the Brand image of its institutions. A number of advantages and disadvantages for the use of social media by HEIs have been identified in Chapter 2 of this study. HEIs should use social media in an effective way in order to obtain the highest benefit from using social media when marketing and advertising their institutions as this ultimately leads to the enhanced Brand image on an institution. Furthermore, HEIs and in this case, the NMMU, identifies the importance of using social media at an increased level and on a more regular basis as it is evident from the empirical results discussed in Chapter 6 that the use of social media does in fact lead to the improved Brand image of a HEI. The respondents of the study are also aware of the importance of the variables contributing to the successful use of social media by HEIs in order to improve its image.

Furthermore, a number of suggestions and recommendations have been offered in this study to assist the marketing communicators of HEIs in achieving an improved image for its institution.
REFERENCES


Han, Y. 2006. *Impact of brand identity on the perceived brand image of the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University*. Unpublished Masters Dissertation, Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, Port Elizabeth.


ANNEXURE A: QUESTIONNAIRES FOR THE TWO SAMPLE GROUPS
The Centre for Applied Management Sciences (CAMS) is a research unit functioning under the auspices of the Department of Business Management at Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU). The CAMS is currently (2011) conducting research on the impact that social media has on the brand image of a higher education institution (HEI) with the sample being NMMU students. This questionnaire is designed to obtain information to assess the brand image of NMMU and may form the basis for practical and corrective steps to facilitate the higher education institution (HEI) to improve its brand image, through paying attention to key branding and social media elements.

1. Section A:

Indicate to what extent do you agree or disagree with the statements. Mark the applicable block with a cross (X).

The NMMU brand:

1.1 is resilient (strong)  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

This script is used for the form validation.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.2 reflects the people-centered orientation of the university</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 send clear communication messages to me</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4 is communicated in a consistent manner</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5 reflects the university's vision</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.6 reflects good value for money</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.7 has real meaning (relevance) to me</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.8 provides all students with equal access to learning opportunities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.9 reflects the university's mission</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.10 reflects my educational needs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.11 is well recognised nationally</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.12 reflects the visual expression of the university</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.13 reflects engagement will all stakeholders</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.14 is unique</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.15 is a verbal expression of the institution</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.16 fulfills specific stakeholder needs</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.17 is well accepted by stakeholders</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.18 makes me feel part of the institution</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.19 reflects competence</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.20 reflects excellent service delivery</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.21 provides high quality academic programmes</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.22 creates a high level of confidence</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.23 reflects transformation for equity</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.24 reflects high quality research</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.25 reflects pride (including heritage, legacy and traditions)</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.26 exceeds expectations in terms of promises</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.27 conveys a high sense of reliability</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.28 always delivers academic services on time</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.29 reflects respect for diversity</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.30 is innovative</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.31 is differentiated from those of other Higher Education Institutions in the country</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.32 reflects high quality teaching</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.33 is advertised in a credible manner</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.34 signifies trustworthiness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.35 is well recognised internationally</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.36 strives to improve excellence in academic programmes and thus the performance of their students</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.37 reflects sophistication</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.38 signals legitimacy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.39 creates high levels of awareness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.40 is modern and up-to-date</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.41 is performing well in terms of my expectations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.42 reflects exceptional academic achievements</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.43 reflects academic value in line with stakeholder needs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.44 reflects strong values</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.45</td>
<td>is superior to competition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.46</td>
<td>is communicated in an honest manner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.47</td>
<td>reflects transformation for fairness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.48</td>
<td>leads to the fulfillment of the dreams and aspirations of me as a student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.49</td>
<td>delivers on promises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>the NMMU logo reflect the brand identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.51</td>
<td>the NMMU brand identity is strongly established in the mind of stakeholders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.52</td>
<td>I prefer the NMMU brand to those of other Higher Education Institutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.53</td>
<td>the NMMU slogan (For Tomorrow) reflects the brand identity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 2. Section B

The following information is needed to help the researcher in obtaining the biographical data of the respondent.

Mark the applicable block by clicking the relevant icon. Complete the applicable information.

| 2.1 | Are you a registered Facebook user? | Yes | No |
| 2.2 | If yes, do you like the NMMU page on | Yes | No |
Facebook?

2.3 If your answer to question 2.2 is NO, please complete question 2.3. Why do you not like the NMMU page? Mark ALL the applicable blocks. You may choose MORE than one option.

- [ ] I am not aware of the NMMU Facebook page
- [ ] Lack of information
- [ ] I am not interested
- [ ] It is not cool
- [ ] Other

2.4 If you have ticked OTHER in question 2.3, please state what it is that you do not like about the NMMU Facebook page?

2.5 In which age group do you fall?

- [ ] 17 - 20
- [ ] 21 - 25
- [ ] 26 - 30
- [ ] 30+

2.6 What is your sex?

- [ ] Male
- [ ] Female

2.7 Are you an undergraduate or post-graduate student?

- [ ] Undergraduate
- [ ] Post-graduate

2.8 Are you a full-time or part-time student?

- [ ] Full-time
- [ ] Part-time

2.9 In which faculty are you studying? Mark the applicable block by clicking the appropriate option.

(please select)

2.10 Please indicate on which NMMU campus the majority of your contact sessions are presented? Mark the applicable block by clicking the appropriate option.

(please select)

3. Section 3
This section should be completed by students who are active Facebook users.

Mark the applicable block by clicking the relevant icon. Please complete the applicable information.

### 3.1 How often do you use Facebook?
Mark the applicable block by clicking the appropriate option.

- [ ] I am always logged on
- [ ] Once a day
- [ ] More than once a day
- [ ] Once a week
- [ ] More than once a week
- [ ] Monthly

### 3.2 Where do you access your Facebook account from?
Mark ALL the applicable blocks by clicking the appropriate blocks. You may choose MORE than one option.

- [ ] From home
- [ ] From university
- [ ] Via cell phone
- [ ] From Internet cafes
- [ ] From WiFi hotspots

### 3.3 On which social networking sites do you have a profile?
Mark ALL the applicable blocks by clicking the appropriate blocks. You may choose MORE than one option.

- [ ] Facebook
- [ ] Twitter
- [ ] Flickr
- [ ] MySpace
- [ ] LinkedIn
- [ ] YouTube
- [ ] Other

### 3.4 If you ticked OTHER in question 3.3, please indicate which social networking site?

### 3.5 What amount of time do you spend on the social networking site when logged on?

- [ ] $5$ minutes
- [ ] $5 - 10$ minutes
- [ ] $11 - 30$ minutes
- [ ] $30 - 60$ minutes
- [ ] $> 60$ minutes

### 3.6 What is your purpose for logging into Facebook?
Mark ALL the applicable blocks by clicking the

- [ ] Finding old friends
- [ ] Keeping contact with friends and family
3.7 If you ticked OTHER in 3.6, please indicate other purposes?

3.8 How many friends do you have on Facebook?

4. Personal details for LUCKY DRAW

Your participation completing this questionnaire is entirely voluntary and details of your participation will be kept strictly confidential. Should you wish to participate in the lucky draw please respond to the questions below:

4.1 * Title, Name and Surname

4.2 * Student Number

4.3 * Cell phone number

4.4 * Email address

Thank you very much for completing the questionnaire.
The Centre for Applied Management Sciences (CAMS) is a research unit functioning under the auspices of the Department of Business Management at Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU). The CAMS is currently (2011) conducting research on the impact that social media has on the brand image of a higher education institution (HEI) with the sample being NMMU students. This questionnaire is designed to obtain information to assess the brand image of NMMU and may form the basis for practical and corrective steps to facilitate the higher education institution (HEI) to improve its brand image, through paying attention to key branding and social media elements.

1. Section A

Indicate to what extent do you agree or disagree with the statements. Mark the applicable statement by clicking the appropriate radio button.

The NMMU brand:

1.1 is resilient (strong)
<p>| | | | | | | | | | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>reflects the people-centered orientation of the university</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>sends clear communication messages to me</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>is communicated in a consistent manner</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>reflects the university's vision</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>reflects good value for money</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>has real meaning (relevance) for me</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>provides all students with equal access to learning opportunities</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>reflects the university's mission</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>reflects my educational needs</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>is well recognised nationally</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>reflects a visual expression of the institution</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>reflects engagement with all stakeholders</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.14</td>
<td>is unique</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>is a verbal expression of the institution</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.16</td>
<td>fulfills specific stakeholder needs</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>is well accepted by stakeholders</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>makes me feel part of the institution</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.19</td>
<td>reflects competence</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>reflects excellent service delivery</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.21</td>
<td>provides high quality academic programmes</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.22</td>
<td>creates a high level of confidence</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.23</td>
<td>reflects transformation for equity</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.24</td>
<td>reflects high quality research</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>reflects pride (including heritage, legacy and traditions)</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.26</td>
<td>exceeds expectations in terms of promises</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>Strongly agree</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.27</td>
<td>conveys a high sense of reliability</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
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<td>Strongly agree</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.28</td>
<td>always delivers academic services on time</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.29</td>
<td>reflects respect for diversity</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>Strongly agree</td>
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<td>1.30</td>
<td>is innovative</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
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<td>Strongly agree</td>
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<td>1.31</td>
<td>is differentiated from those of other Higher Education Institutions in the</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
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<td>Strongly agree</td>
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<td>Statement</td>
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<td>1.32 Reflects high quality teaching</td>
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<td>1.33 Is advertised in a credible manner</td>
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<td>1.34 Signifies trustworthiness</td>
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<td>1.35 Is well recognised internationally</td>
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<td>1.36 Strives to improve excellence in academic programmes and thus the performance of their students</td>
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<td>1.37 Reflects sophistication</td>
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<td>1.38 Signifies legitimacy</td>
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<td>1.39 Creates high levels of awareness</td>
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<td>1.40 Is modern and up-to-date</td>
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<td>1.41 Is performing well in terms of my expectations</td>
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<td>1.42 Reflects exceptional academic achievements</td>
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<td>1.43 Reflects academic value in line with stakeholders' needs</td>
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<td>1.44 Reflects strong values</td>
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<td>1.45 Is superior to competition</td>
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</table>
1.46 is communicated in an honest manner

1.47 reflects transformation for fairness

1.48 leads to the fulfillment of the dreams and aspirations of me as a student

1.49 delivers on promises

1.50 the NMMU logo reflects the brand identity

1.51 the NMMU brand identity is strongly established in the mind of stakeholders

1.52 I prefer the NMMU brand to those of other Higher Education Institutions

1.53 the NMMU slogan (For Tomorrow) reflects the brand identity

2. Section B

The following information is needed to obtain the biographical data of the respondent.

Mark the applicable block by clicking the relevant icon. Please complete the applicable information.

2.1 Are you a registered Facebook user?

2.2 If yes, do you like the NMMU page on Facebook?

2.3 What do you like about the NMMU page? You may choose MORE than

- The logos
- The news updates
### 2.4 If you have ticked OTHER in question 2.3, please state what attracts you to the NMMU Facebook page?

- Links to interesting pages
- Photos
- Video posts
- Other

### 2.5 In which age group do you fall?

- 17 - 20
- 21 - 25
- 26 - 30
- 30+

### 2.6 What is your sex?

- Male
- Female

### 2.7 Are you an undergraduate or post-graduate student?

- Undergraduate
- Post-graduate

### 2.8 Are you a full-time or part-time student?

- Full-time
- Part-time

### 2.9 In which faculty are you studying? Mark the applicable block by clicking the appropriate option.

- (please select)

### 2.10 Please indicate on which NMMU campus the majority of your contact sessions are presented? Mark the applicable block by clicking the appropriate option.

- (please select)

---

### 3. Section C

This section should be completed by students who are active Facebook users.

Mark the applicable block by clicking the relevant icon. Please complete the applicable information.

### 3.1 How often do you use Facebook? Mark

- I am always logged on
the applicable block by clicking the appropriate option.

3.2 Where do you access your Facebook account from? Mark ALL the applicable blocks by clicking the appropriate blocks. You may choose MORE than one option.

- From home
- From university
- Via cell phone
- From Internet cafes
- From WiFi hotspots

3.3 On which social networking sites do you have a profile? Mark ALL the applicable blocks by clicking the appropriate blocks. You may choose MORE than one option.

- Facebook
- Twitter
- Flickr
- MySpace
- LinkedIn
- YouTube
- Other

3.4 If you ticked OTHER in question 3.3, please indicate which social networking sites?

3.5 What amount of time do you spend on the social networking site when logged on?

- > 5 minutes
- 5 - 10 minutes
- 11 - 30 minutes
- 30 - 60 minutes
- > 60 minutes

3.6 What is your purpose for logging into Facebook? Mark ALL the appropriate blocks by clicking the appropriate blocks. You may choose MORE than one option.

- Finding old friends
3.7 If you ticked OTHER in question 3.6, please indicate other purposes?

3.8 How many friends do you have on Facebook?

4. Personal details for LUCKY DRAW

Your participation in completing this questionnaire is entirely voluntary and details of your participation will be kept strictly confidential.

Should you wish to participate in the lucky draw please respond to the questions below:

4.1 Title, Name and Surname

4.2 Student Number

4.3 Cell phone number

4.4 Email address

Thank you very much for completing the questionnaire.
ANNEXURE B: IDEAS ON STATEMENTS TO POST ON FACEBOOK TO SUPPORT THE DEPENDENT, INTERVENING AND INDEPENDENT VARIABLE
ANNEXURE B

IDEAS ON STATEMENTS TO POST ON FACEBOOK TO SUPPORT THE DEPENDENT, INTERVENING AND INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEMS</th>
<th>QUESTION</th>
<th>POSSIBLE POSTINGS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>BRAND IMAGE: ACADEMIC</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 1 | The NMMU brand reflects high quality teaching | • The new lecture venue and its features  
• The lecturers (general statements on achievements and teaching awards)  
• How many profs and Drs we have  
• Achievements of different department lectures  
• New "green" building; business school and hotel school |
| 2 | The NMMU brand reflects high quality research | • Awards won  
• Inaugural lectures  
• People coming to talk at NMMU on their research  
• Researcher of the year for different faculties  
• NFR rated researchers |
| 3 | The NMMU brand leads to the fulfilment of the dreams and aspirations of me as a student | • Statements about what they can achieve with their degree or diploma  
• Fashion design student going to SA fashion week  
• Sport achievements |
| 4 | The NMMU brand reflects exceptional academic achievements | • Stats on how many different programmes are offered per faculty |
| 5 | The NMMU brand reflects excellent service delivery | • Awards that programmes at NMMU won  
• Focus on niche areas  
• Services offered at NMMU e.g.  
• Health care;  
• physiotherapy;  
• writing centre;  
• food shops;  
• university shop;  
• Van Schaiks |
| 6 | The NMMU brand provide all students with equal access to learning opportunities | • Maybe something about not making decisions based on race etc,  
• all people have access to facilities and what is offered such as  
• Thutuka;  
• SI sessions;  
• TUTS ect  
• Bridging programmes offered |

**BRAND IMAGE: RECOGNITION**

| 7 | The NMMU brand is well recognised nationally | • SA achievements of NMMU  
• Their rating in Terms of other SA universities  
• Awards that the University won  
• Papers won  
• Business School ratings increased |
| 8 | The NMMU brand is well recognised internationally | • Exchange programmes  
• NMMU racing going overseas  
• International achievements and awards  
• Lecturers going on exchange teaching programmes |

**BRAND IDENTITY**

| 9 | The NMMU brand reflects engagement with all stakeholders | • Community involvement  
• Alumni  
• Community projects |
| 10 | The NMMU brand reflects the university’s vision | • Short statements of the vision of the NMMU  
• Awareness of 2020 vision |
| 11 | The NMMU brand reflects the university’s mission | • Short statements of the mission of the NMMU  
• Awareness of 2020 vision |
| 12 | The NMMU brand is differentiated from those of other Higher Education Institutions in the country | • State how the NMMU is different from other Universities, things that makes them stand out from the rest  
• Being first to do something  
• Being located on a Nature reserve |
<p>| 13 | The NMMU brand reflects strong values | • The Green Fridays (mail 16 May) |</p>
<table>
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</table>
| 14 | The NMMU brand reflects a visual expression of the institution | • Talk about the values of NMMU stated in Vision and Mission  
• Vision 2020  
• Green project from Riyadh Lillah |
| 15 | The NMMU brand is a verbal expression of the institution | • Post pictures of different areas, venues, entrances and nature  
• Statement about what the university stands for in wording |
| 16 | The NMMU brand creates high levels of awareness | • How to make students aware of NMMU  
• Draw attention to how well our sports teams are doing  
• Making them aware of important notices placed on notice boards  
• Posts on crime eg the e-mails that is always sent out with regards to cars or laptops being stolen |
| 17 | The NMMU logo reflects the brand identity | • Pictures on the logo and what the logo stands for (different parts)  
• Who designed it  
• When was it designed  
• Colours of logo |
| 18 | The NMMU slogan (“For Tomorrow”) reflects the brand identity | • What do they mean with slogan  
• How did it originate  
• What it stands for  
• How long has it been the slogan |
| 19 | The NMMU brand reflects transformation for equity | • NMMU stance on promoting an transforming equity (get from vision and mission (bullet points)) |
| 20 | The NMMU brand reflects transformation for fairness | • NMMU stance on promoting an transforming fairness |
| 21 | The NMMU brand reflects respect for diversity | • Statements from the V&M on diversity |
| 22 | The NMMU brand reflects the people-centred orientation of the University | • Statements from the V&M on people-centred |
| 23 | The NMMU brand strives to improve excellence in their academic programmes and the performance of their stakeholders | • Statements from the V&M on excellence |
| **REPUTATION** |   |   |
| 24 | The NMMU brand signifies trustworthiness | State why the NMMU can be trusted  
How do they build the trust of students |
<p>| 25 | The NMMU brand signals legitimacy |   |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>The NMMU brand is advertised in a credible manner</th>
<th>Generally advertise NMMU • Ask whether they believe the NMMU is advertised and communicated in credible manner (statements)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>The NMMU brand sends clear communication messages to stakeholders</td>
<td>Advertise the NMMU by posting pictures, words, video links • Post on the &quot;U&quot; for open day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>The NMMU brand conveys a high sense of reliability</td>
<td>Ask whether they believe NMMU is reliable (statements) • How do they go about in ensuring that NMMU come forward as being reliable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>The NMMU brand is communicated in a honest manner</td>
<td>State that we as NMMU ensure the post are accurate and honest to the best of their ability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>The NMMU brand creates a high level of confidence</td>
<td>Ask whether students believe that what they hear from NMMU makes them confident (statements) • The support given by NMMU (does it make them feel confident that they can achieve their dreams)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>The NMMU brand reflects pride (including heritage, legacy and traditions)</td>
<td>Post statements on the heritage, legacy and traditions of NMMU e.g. traditions own to NMMU, the alumni students (take things from the NMMU news)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>The NMMU brand is communicated in a consistent manner</td>
<td>Make sure that how the NMMU brand is conveyed and communicated is the same manner every time</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**RELEVANCE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>The NMMU brand reflects my educational needs</th>
<th>Ask how they feel on the level of and quality of lecturing and does it fulfil their needs (not sure if this is good idea but maybe) (statements)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>The NMMU brand has real meaning (relevance) for me</td>
<td>Statements on what the NMMU brand means to respondents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>The NMMU brand is innovative</td>
<td>Post on innovations by NMMU e.g. - InnoVenton; - NMMU racing; - new product developments ect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>The NMMU brand reflects academic value in line with stakeholders’ needs</td>
<td>Does the academic nature of the university meet the needs that students have, such as giving them practical and well as academic examples and information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>The NMMU brand is well accepted by stakeholders</td>
<td>How is the NMMU brand received and view by students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>The NMMU brand is modern and up-to-date</td>
<td>Statements showing that NMMU is modern and up to date; post here on: - building 123: - the technology used their such as the</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>39</strong></td>
<td>The NMMU brand fulfils specific stakeholders’ needs</td>
<td>• Ask them what needs does NMMU fulfil, maybe give them options to choose from</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>40</strong></td>
<td>The NMMU brand is unique</td>
<td>• State why the brand is unique</td>
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**PERSONALITY**

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<tr>
<td><strong>41</strong></td>
<td>The NMMU brand reflects competence</td>
<td>• State why the NMMU brand is competent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>42</strong></td>
<td>The NMMU brand reflects sophistication</td>
<td>• Post on sophisticated methods used by NMMU such as technology</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| **43** | The NMMU brand is superior to competition | • Find statements identifying NMMU as standing out from other universities, such as:  
  - students being taken up in local, provincial and national teams;  
  - Staff achievements  
  - Academic achievements |
| **44** | The NMMU brand is resilient (strong) | • What makes the NMMU brand strong? (same as item 40) |

**PERFORMANCE**

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<td><strong>45</strong></td>
<td>The NMMU brand delivers on promises</td>
<td>• Similar to item 47 and state what the promises is</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>46</strong></td>
<td>The NMMU brand reflects a good value for money</td>
<td>• Post comparisons on how much the programmes at NMMU cost compared to universities such as Maties, Tuks etc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>47</strong></td>
<td>The NMMU brand exceeds expectations in terms of promises</td>
<td>• What does the NMMU promise, maybe like our promise to you (get out of V&amp;M or website)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>48</strong></td>
<td>The NMMU brand is performing well in terms of my expectations</td>
<td>• Ask what do they expect from the NMMU brand, use those responses as questions to then ask whether they believe that NMMU is meeting these expectations (statements)</td>
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</table>
| **49** | The NMMU brand provides high quality academic programmes | • Ratings of programmes and achievements and awards and then  
  • general post from different departments such as:  
    - competitions; and  
    - department news on their programmes |
| **50** | The NMMU brand always delivers academic services on time | • Punctuality of the lectures, lecturers, timetables, exams |

**RELATIONSHIP**

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<td><strong>51</strong></td>
<td>I prefer the NMMU brand to those of other Higher Education Institutions</td>
<td>• Ask students why they chose NMMU as their choice of university to study at (statement)</td>
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| **52** | The NMMU brand makes me feel part of the institution | • “Why do you or what do you like about the NMMU brand?”
|   |   | • Statements on how the NMMU try and make all students feel part of a bigger family, how to create unity between students and all involved |
| **53** | The NMMU brand identity is strongly established in the mind of stakeholders | • Can you identify the logo or slogan of NMMU by merely seeing it without the wording
• Does the NMMU brand stand out from other universities
• Can you identify NMMU from a group of university logos |

ANNEXURE C: FACEBOOK POSTINGS TO SUPPORT THE DEPENDENT, INTERVENING AND INDEPENDENT VARIABLES
### BRAND IMAGE: ACADEMIC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEMS</th>
<th>QUESTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The NMMU brand reflects high quality teaching</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Congratulations to our Researcher of the Year, Prof Richard Cowling of the Faculty of Science and our Teacher of the Year, Dr Andre du Plessis of the Faculty of Education.  
  2,985 Impressions  0.47% Feedback

- Walking Between the Worlds - an exhibition by NMMU Professor of Fine Art, CLEONE CULL is on show at The Athenæum, Cnr Military Road & Belmont Terrace Central. Open on week days from 9am to 4pm from 26 September - 6 October 2011.

- DID YOU KNOW: The NMMU has awarded six honorary doctorates at this year’s graduation ceremonies. They are:  
  Sir David Attenborough  
  Judge Lex Mpati  
  Tembeka Nkamba - van Wyk  
  Professor Suresh Kana
2. Our BCom graduates’ results in the South African Institute of Chartered Accountants (SAICA) professional exams are consistently above the national average. Well done NMMU accounting school.

2.054 Impressions 1.12% Feedback

• NMMU will host a CAREERS EVENING at the Raymond Mhlaba Indoor Sport Centre in Motherwell this evening where our VC will address teachers, parents and top learners from township schools. The event starts at 18:00.

2,811 Impressions 0.25% Feedback

2 The NMMU brand reflects high quality research

• Congratulations to our Researcher of the Year, Prof Richard Cowling of the Faculty of Science and our Teacher of the Year, Dr Andre du Plessis of the Faculty of Education.

2,985 Impressions 0.47% Feedback

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  Professor Suresh Kana
  Mark Shuttleworth
  Professor Wally Morrow

2,897 Impressions 0.62% Feedback

3 The NMMU brand leads to the fulfilment of the dreams and aspirations of me as a student

• Did you graduate from NMMU but were unable to attend your graduation and have not made arrangements for collection of your graduation certificate? Then please contact us on exams@nmmu.ac.za. Please remember T’s and C’s apply.

Student achievements
NMMU Graphic Design students Lubabalo Mtati and Michelle Hoch bagged three Loerie Awards.

- Congratulations to NMMU BTech Fashion student Kelly Esterhuyse, for winning the Elle New Talent Design award at SA Fashion Week last night!!!

- Community Dialogue: another event on Thursday. See the picture for details.

- Join us for the “Be more than a number” postgrad campaign competition today outside the Kraal area on South. Promoters will hand out free coffee from 11:00 onwards. Each cup will have a unique code – if your code is read out, you could roll the dice and win a great prize which includes a high end laptop, iPad, Blackberry Torch, Edgars vouchers, van Schaik vouchers and KFC vouchers.

- The Department of Applied Design presents the annual Free Creative Fashion Show. The creative work of all undergraduate Fashion and Textile Design students will be on show with this year’s theme being Greek mythology where students’ designs will express and interpret this mythology.

  DATE: 30 September 2011
  TIME: 7:00pm
  VENUE: Goldfields Auditorium, North Campus
  TICKETS: only R40 and are available from Bianca Fourie 041 504 3848 or at the door

- NMMU and Weekend Post Matric of the Year 2011
Our range of undergraduate programmes equips students for careers in more than 130 broad fields. NMMU's programmes are internationally recognised and accredited by the relevant professional bodies.

NMMU BTech Textile Design graduate, Laduma Ngxokolo was chosen to show his unique maXhosa men's jersey range at London Fashion Week recently.

The NMMU brand reflects exceptional academic achievements

DID YOU KNOW: NMMU is one of six comprehensive universities in South Africa, offering both general and professionally orientated university programmes as well as technologically and career oriented programmes, from entrance level (certificate) through to research level (PhD).

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Have you used Student Counselling services this year? We need your feedback to improve our services. Please visit our survey @: http://websurvey.nmmu.ac.za/q.asp?sid=226&k=uxklligcvt
Student Counselling

Remember that Financial Aid Awareness week is on the go. Today - North Campus, outside cafeteria, 12:00 – 15:00.
• Remember the Financial Aid Awareness week event on South Campus today - in front of the old Financial Aid Office (next to Admissions) 12:00–15:00.
• Financial Aid Awareness - today at Second Avenue Campus. Entrance hallway in Main Building. 12:00 – 15:00. Be there!
• Missionvale students take note that the Financial Aid Awareness campaign is on your campus today - 28 September, in front of the Financial Aid Office from 12:00–15:00.

NMMU Campus Health Services
We have counselling staff on all our campuses, so you can visit us for personal counselling regarding any issues you may have - individuals or couples welcome.

It is very important to arrive ON TIME for your appointment, please ensure that if you make an appointment you will be there at that particular time...

Have you made use of the Writing Centre at NMMU?
The Writing Centre assists students to improve their assignment writing skills. NMMU has 3 writing centres situated on the North, South and 2nd Avenue campus.

Do not wait! Make your appointment today!

The NMMU brand provide all students with equal access to learning opportunities

Keys to Success: Do not miss today’s free Critical Thinking student lunch-hour seminar at the North Campus, Venue M218 from 12:25 – 13:25

DID YOU KNOW: Quality higher education is offered to more than 25 000 students across six campuses, making NMMU the largest university in the Eastern and Southern Cape.

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<th>The NMMU brand is well recognised nationally</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• <strong>DASO in unofficial win (23 September 2011)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.nmmu.ac.za">www.nmmu.ac.za</a></td>
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<th>AIESEC NMMU, in partnership with Volkswagen and Procter &amp; Gamble SA presents the AIESEC NMMU National Student Apprentice Challenge 2011. (NSAC 2011)</th>
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<td>NSAC 2011 is a practical learning development programme attracting go-getters eager to gain valuable business skills. The skills include among others-entrepreneurship, sales and marketing techniques, project management, financial planning, leadership...</td>
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<tr>
<th>Top achievers are awarded through a merit award system or the Vice-Chancellor's Scholarship awards, which is the highest value bursaries given by a public university in South Africa.</th>
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<td>1,557 Impressions 0.58% Feedback</td>
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<th>Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University is the top university nationally in terms of brand, corporate publications and marketing campaigns. NMMU won 15 awards at the annual Marketing, Advancement and Communication in Education's (MACE) Excellence Awards evening at Misty Hills outside Johannesburg last night. This was the most by any university. Four of the awards were for NMMU's flash mob which has been viewed by more than 110 000 people around the globe on YouTube.</th>
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The NMMU brand is well recognised internationally

- NMMU was recently catapulted to the forefront of global nanoscience research with the arrival of a state-of-the-art atomic resolution electron microscope from Japan. The High Resolution Transmission Electron Microscope (HRTEM) is the first of its kind that has been sold commercially outside of Japan and the last of a suite of four electron microscopes, costing a total R90-million installed at NMMU. In the photo: (left to right) Prof Jan Neethling, Dr Jaco Olivier (who received his PhD in April), PhD student Arno Janse van Vuuren and Prof Mike Lehy – all from NMMU's Physics Department.

Our range of undergraduate programmes equips students for careers in more than 130 broad fields. NMMU's programmes are internationally recognised and accredited by the relevant professional bodies.

NMMU's choir is internationally acclaimed and has won several international awards.

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BRAND IDENTITY

The NMMU brand reflects engagement with all stakeholders

- Are you an old NMMU (PE Technikon or UPE) student and what to get in touch with the university?

The NMMU Alumni Association keeps the records of over 70 000 alumni spread throughout the world from NMMU as well as its predecessors – PE Technikon and the University of Port Elizabeth. The Alumni Association has chapters in Port Elizabeth, East London, Southern Cape, London (UK) and East Africa. For more information please contact the Alumni Relations Office on +27 (0)41 504 3935 or e-mail alumni@nmmu.ac.za
Community Dialogue: another event on Thursday. See the picture for details.

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NSAC 2011 is a practical learning development programme attracting go-getters eager to gain valuable business skills. The skills include among others- entrepreneurship, sales and marketing techniques, project management, financial planning, leadership

(NMMU) executive management would like to assure staff and students that the university is urgently addressing the issue of juvenile offenders studying at NMMU while on parole.

As shared in today’s Herald, some of these students were expelled earlier this year, but apparently remained in the Port Elizabeth area where two of them continued their criminal activities until their arrest in Central at the weekend.

We appreciate your concerns and we are giving this matter our urgent and immediate attention.

The NMMU brand reflects the university’s vision

Our vision is to be a dynamic African university, recognised for its leadership in generating cutting-edge knowledge for a sustainable future.

NMMU’s 5 values are integrity, taking responsibility, diversity, Ubuntu and excellence.

The NMMU brand reflects the

Our mission is to offer a diverse range of quality educational opportunities that will make a critical and constructive contribution to regional, national and global sustainability.
university’s mission

- NMMU’s 5 values are integrity, taking responsibility, diversity, Ubuntu and excellence.

The NMMU brand is differentiated from those of other Higher Education Institutions in the country

- DID YOU KNOW: The NMMU South Campus is the ONLY campus in the world that is situated on a 720-hectare Nature Reserve

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13 The NMMU brand reflects strong values

- The Computing Sciences Department at NMMU took the “Green Fridays” campaign to a whole new level last week! (Left to right) Ntembeko Jafta, Ntombizanele Zomba, Prof Jean Greyling, Marinthea Snyman and Hayley Irvine all had Bok Fever.

2,234 Impressions 0.49% Feedback

- NMMU’s 5 values are integrity, taking responsibility, diversity, Ubuntu and excellence.

2,175 Impressions 0.83% Feedback

14 The NMMU brand reflects a visual expression of the institution

- SRC Voting at NMMU

- DID YOU KNOW: The NMMU South Campus is the ONLY campus in the world that is situated on a 720-hectare Nature Reserve

1,674 Impressions 2.27% Feedback

- Bok Friday

- NMMU’s logo is the visual expression of what our university stands for, what sets it apart and what it aims to achieve. It’s the visual expression of our vision, mission and values. The different elements of the logo play an important role in building a
• The round “flower” part of the logo is called the icon. It’s circular nature suggests cyclical and continuous change - a key element of NMMU – it’s about fresh thinking and innovation. It also suggests a rising sun, a new dawn - the birth of a new university. The circle is a symbol of unity, with the triangular elements representing diversity, as well as engagement and interaction, both amongst ourselves and our stakeholders in the community. The inner element emphasises that we are a people-centred organisation, in a learning environment. The globe represents our connection to the rest of the world as well as to nature.

• NMMU and Weekend Post Matric of the Year 2011

• NMMU Postgrad Campaign
The NMMU North Campus Conference Centre boasts an up-market theatre for conferences of up to 160 delegates, two smaller venues for training or seminars and restaurant seating 150 diners, from business breakfasts to evening banquets.

The NMMU brand is a verbal expression of the institution

NMMU’s logo is the visual expression of what our university stands for, what sets it apart and what it aims to achieve. It’s the visual expression of our vision, mission and values. The different elements of the logo play an important role in building a strong, clear identity.

The round “flower” part of the logo is called the icon. It’s circular nature suggests cyclical and continuous change - a key element of NMMU – it’s about fresh thinking and innovation. It also suggests a rising sun, a new dawn - the birth of a new university. The circle is a symbol of unity, with the triangular elements representing diversity, as well as engagement and interaction, both amongst ourselves and our stakeholders in the community. The inner element emphasises that we are a people-centred organisation, in a learning environment. The globe represents our connection to the rest of the world as well as to nature.
• NMMU is a university for tomorrow - we nurture innovation, foster creativity, embrace technology, and develop people to meet the challenges of the world of tomorrow. “For tomorrow” also symbolises our commitment to focus on the future our commitment to sustainable development.

The NMMU brand creates high levels of awareness

• NMMU’s annual karate tournament is taking place on Saturday 24 September 2011 at the NMMU Yebo Gogo Indoor Sport Centre Missionvale Campus

• Congratulations to Buchule Madikizela (Mr NMMU) and Ziphozakhe Zokufa (Miss NMMU) crowned on the weekend. First runner for Miss NMMU was Yolande Oosthuysen (bottom left) and 2nd runner up, Chule Gongqa. First runner up for Mr NMMU was Lithalethu Madikazi (right) and 2nd runner-up Worship Freemantle.

• If you’re in Pretoria, come down to Supersport Park today to watch the national cricket club champs final when the Mecer NMMU Madibaz take on UJ - or send through your messages of support.

The NMMU logo reflects the brand identity

• NMMU’s logo is the visual expression of what our university stands for, what sets it apart and what it aims to achieve. It’s the visual expression of our vision, mission and values. The different elements of the logo play an important role in building a strong, clear identity.

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Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University asked: Can you identify the NMMU logo or slogan by only seeing one of the elements?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>45 votes</th>
<th>45 people</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>2 votes</td>
<td>2 people</td>
</tr>
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</table>

1,575 Impressions 0% Feedback

**The NMMU slogan (“For Tomorrow”) reflects the brand identity**

- NMMU is a university for tomorrow - we nurture innovation, foster creativity, embrace technology, and develop people to meet the challenges of the world of tomorrow. “For tomorrow” also symbolises our commitment to focus on the future our commitment to sustainable development.

**For tomorrow**

497 Impressions 1.25% Feedback

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1,575 Impressions 0% Feedback

**The NMMU brand reflects transformation for equity**

- If you are an NMMU student - make sure you vote in the SRC elections today! 2nd Avenue (Auditorium & Oceana); Missionvale (Student Life Centre); North (Lebombo/Letaba, Ziggy's & Goldfields Auditorium); South (Admin foyer, Kraal, Sweet Saal & Building 35) and off-campus (Laboria & South Point). Make a difference and vote!

- **DASO in unofficial win (23 September 2011)**

www.nmmu.ac.za

THE Democratic Alliance Student Organisation (DASO) has unofficially won the Student Representative Council (SRC) elections at Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU) for ...
• **Ubuntu:** Respect you fellow human being, treat them fairly, disagree with them honestly, enjoy their friendship, explore your thoughts about another candidly, work together for a common goal and help one another to achieve it. And always remember that compassion is a central part of ubuntu and what we strive to achieve both in and outside NMMU.

2,211 Impressions 0.68% Feedback

• **NMMU reflects transformation for equity and fairness as evident from the composition and diversity of our staff and students.**

1,848 Impressions 0% Feedback

---

20 The NMMU brand reflects transformation for fairness

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• **Integrity:** At NMMU we encourage our students and staff to live with integrity, because in life and in business integrity is the essence of everything successful.

2,310 Impressions 0.39% Feedback

• **Ubuntu:** Respect you fellow human being, treat them fairly, disagree with them honestly, enjoy their friendship, explore your thoughts about another candidly, work together for a common goal and help one another to achieve it. And always remember that compassion is a central part of ubuntu and what we strive to achieve both in and outside NMMU.

2,211 Impressions 0.68% Feedback

• **NMMU reflects transformation for equity and fairness as evident from the composition and diversity of our staff and students.**

1,848 Impressions 0% Feedback

---

21 The NMMU brand reflects respect for diversity

• We wish all our Jewish students, staff and their families for Rosh Hashanah, and the ten days of repentance culminating in Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement. May the new year be filled with all that is good. Leshanah tovah tikateiv veteichateim.

2,951 Impressions 0.14% Feedback

• **NMMU has a diverse student population with about 2000 foreign students from 34 different countries, which adds to NMMU's diversity.**

1,543 Impressions 1.04% Feedback
• **Diversity:** Diversity means understanding that each individual is unique, and recognising our individual differences. It is about understanding each other and moving beyond simple tolerance to embracing and celebrating the rich dimensions of diversity contained within each individual. We encourage both students and lecturers to explore these differences in a safe, positive and nurturing environment that is NMMU.

1,893 Impressions 0.85% Feedback

22 The NMMU brand reflects the people-centred orientation of the University

• **Integrity:** At NMMU we encourage our students and staff to live with integrity, because in life and in business integrity is the essence of everything successful.

2,310 Impressions 0.39% Feedback

• **Taking responsibility:** Activities undertaken by you today will affect you tomorrow. Remain responsible in your actions in order to safeguard the hopes and dreams you have for tomorrow. A sensible mind knows that in the palm of our hands lies the most important asset of all...the future.

2,108 Impressions 1.23% Feedback

23 The NMMU brand strives to improve excellence in their academic programmes and the performance of their stakeholders

• **Excellence:** The great Aristotle once said, "We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence then, is not an act, but a habit." What he meant was that if the will to win, the desire to succeed and the urge to reach your full potential were key - then use them to unlock the door to personal excellence.

2,001 Impressions 0.75% Feedback

**REPUTATION**

24 The NMMU brand signifies trustworthiness

(NMMU) executive management would like to assure staff and students that the university is urgently addressing the issue of juvenile offenders studying at NMMU while parole.

As shared in today’s Herald, some of these students were expelled earlier this year, but apparently remained in the Port Elizabeth area where two of them continued their criminal activities until their arrest in Central at the weekend.

We appreciate your concerns and we are giving this matter our urgent and immediate attention.

2,881 Impressions 0.66% Feedback

25 The NMMU brand signals legitimacy

• Our range of undergraduate programmes equips students for careers in more than 130 broad fields. NMMU's programmes are internationally recognised and accredited by the relevant professional bodies.

1,755 Impressions 0.23% Feedback

• Our range of undergraduate programmes equips students for careers in more than 130 broad fields. NMMU's programmes are internationally recognised and accredited by the relevant professional bodies.
The NMMU brand is advertised in a credible manner.

• Congratulations to Roxanne Wolmarans – the winner of our “Name the Student Newspaper competition”. The winning name is NMMyou.

• Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University asked: Do you make use of the shuttle service between campuses offered by NMMU?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Votes</th>
<th>People</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Always</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Often</td>
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<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seldom</td>
<td>5</td>
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</tr>
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DATE: 30 September 2011
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VENUE: Goldfields Auditorium, North Campus
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BE MORE THAN A NUMBER. Apply for post graduate studies at NMMU today!

1,543 Impressions  0.65% Feedback

The NMMU brand sends clear communication messages to stakeholders

- Join NMMU’s Glam Squad, ABASA, Toastmasters and AIESEC Student Societies for a high calibre Fashion Show and an After Party at Gondwana Cafe, with the aim of donating all the proceeds of the event to the Sihlangule AIDS network. The event is on 28 September. Tickets are available @R50 at all Society Offices. Contact 041 504 2491 for more details.

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28 The NMMU brand conveys a high sense of reliability

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2,054 Impressions 1.12% Feedback

- Our range of undergraduate programmes equips students for careers in more than 130 broad fields. NMMU’s programmes are internationally recognised and accredited by the relevant professional bodies.

1,755 Impressions 0.23% Feedback

29 The NMMU brand is communicated in a honest manner

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• The NMMU brand creates a high level of confidence

  Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University asked: Does the information that you see on the NMMU Facebook page make you feel confident?

  - Yes: 14 votes
  - No: 4 votes

• The NMMU brand reflects pride (including heritage, legacy and traditions)

  Are you an old NMMU (PE Technikon or UPE) student and what to get in touch with the university?

  The NMMU Alumni Association keeps the records of over 70 000 alumni spread throughout the world from NMMU as well as its predecessors – PE Technikon and the University of Port Elizabeth.

  The Alumni Association has chapters in Port Elizabeth, East London, Southern Cape, London (UK) and East Africa.

  For more information please contact the Alumni Relations Office on +27 (0)41 504 3935 or e-mail alumni@nmmu.ac.za

  - NMMU is home to the oldest art school in the country, which was founded in 1882.

• The NMMU brand is communicated in a consistent manner

  Sum total of all the postings
**RELEVANCE**

33 The NMMU brand reflects my educational needs

- **Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University asked:** How would you rate the level and quality of lecturing at NMMU?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Votes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>23</td>
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<tr>
<td>Not so good</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bad</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University asked:** Do you feel that NMMU meets your social, academic and extracurricular needs?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Votes</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
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<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2,640 Impressions 0% Feedback

- If you have answered "no" to the question of whether you feel that NMMU meets your social, academic and extracurricular needs, please leave a comment to indicate what needs you have that is not met.

  3,256 Impressions 0.55% Feedback

34 The NMMU brand has real meaning (relevance) for me

- **Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University asked:** Does the NMMU brand have real meaning (relevance) to you?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Votes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don’t know</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1,293 Impressions 0% Feedback
The NMMU brand is innovative

- NMMU a step ahead with new Rototest Dynamometer (13 September 2011)

www.nmmu.ac.za

HIGH speed performance vehicles can now be tested without any slippage occurring between the wheel and drum thanks to a new Rototest dynamometer purchased from Sweden by Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University...

2,895 Impressions 0.07% Feedback

- An innovative project from InnoVenton, using marine algae to turn carbon dioxide into biofuels and other products, has put NMMU at the forefront of cutting-edge "green" technology.

2,003 Impressions 0.90% Feedback

- The new library on the Missionvale Campus is one of the first buildings in South Africa to incorporate the DALI (digital address lighting interface) system making it a truly "green" building. The DALI system relies on sensors to control the lighting levels within the building. Lighting and air-conditioning on the South Campus library have been improved with the same technology.

1,581 Impressions 1.14% Feedback

The NMMU brand reflects academic value in line with stakeholders' needs

- Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University asked: How would you rate the level and quality of lecturing at NMMU?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Votes</th>
<th>People</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not so good</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bad</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University asked: Do you feel that NMMU meets your social, academic and extracurricular needs?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Votes</th>
<th>People</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2,640 Impressions 0% Feedback
If you have answered "no" to the question of whether you feel that NMMU meets your social, academic and extracurricular needs, please leave a comment to indicate what needs you have that is not met.

3,256 Impressions 0.55% Feedback

The NMMU brand is well accepted by stakeholders

Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University asked: Does the NMMU brand have real meaning (relevance) to you?

- Yes 37 people
- No 9 people
- I don't know 9 people

1,293 Impressions 0% Feedback

The NMMU brand is modern and up-to-date

NMMU was recently catapulted to the forefront of global nanoscience research with the arrival of a state-of-the-art atomic resolution electron microscope from Japan. The High Resolution Transmission Electron Microscope (HRTEM) is the first of its kind that has been sold commercially outside of Japan and the last of a suite of four electron microscopes, costing a total R90-million installed at NMMU. In the photo: (left to right) Prof Jan Neethling, Dr Jaco Olivier (who received his PhD in April), PhD student Arno Janse van Vuuren and Prof Mike Lehy – all from NMMU's Physics Department.

2,060 Impressions 0.92% Feedback

An innovative project from InnoVenton, using marine algae to turn carbon dioxide into biofuels and other products, has put NMMU at the forefront of cutting-edge "green" technology.

2,003 Impressions 0.90% Feedback
The NMMU brand fulfils specific stakeholders’ needs

- **Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University** asked: **How would you rate the level and quality of lecturing at NMMU?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Votes</th>
<th>People</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>23</td>
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<tr>
<td>Not so good</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bad</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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</tbody>
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- **Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University** asked: **Do you feel that NMMU meets your social, academic and extracurricular needs?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer</th>
<th>Votes</th>
<th>People</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2,640 Impressions 0% Feedback

- If you have answered "no" to the question of whether you feel that NMMU meets your social, academic and extracurricular needs, please leave a comment to indicate what needs you have that is not met.

3,256 Impressions 0.55% Feedback

The NMMU brand is unique

- **DID YOU KNOW:** NMMU is one of six comprehensive universities in South Africa, offering both general and professionally orientated university programmes as well as technologically and career oriented programmes, from entrance level (certificate) through to research level (PhD).

2,672 Impressions 0.67% Feedback

- **DID YOU KNOW:** Quality higher education is offered to more than 25,000 students across six campuses, making NMMU the largest university in the Eastern and Southern Cape.

2,230 Impressions 1.39% Feedback

- Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University is the top university nationally in terms of brand, corporate publications and marketing campaigns. NMMU won 15 awards at the annual Marketing, Advancement and Communication in Education’s (MACE) Excellence Awards evening at Misty Hills outside Johannesburg last night. This was the most by any university. Four of the awards were for NMMUs flash mob which has been viewed by more than 110,000 people around the globe on YouTube.

2,026 Impressions 1.18% Feedback
NMMU was recently catapulted to the forefront of global nanoscience research with the arrival of a state-of-the-art atomic resolution electron microscope from Japan. The High Resolution Transmission Electron Microscope (HRTEM) is the first of its kind that has been sold commercially outside of Japan and the last of a suite of four electron microscopes, costing a total R90-million installed at NMMU. In the photo: (left to right) Prof Jan Neethling, Dr Jaco Olivier (who received his PhD in April), PhD student Arno Janse van Vuuren and Prof Mike Lehy – all from NMMU’s Physics Department.

**PERSONALITY**

41 The NMMU brand reflects competence

- Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University is the top university nationally in terms of brand, corporate publications and marketing campaigns. NMMU won 15 awards at the annual Marketing, Advancement and Communication in Education’s (MACE) Excellence Awards evening at Misty Hills outside Johannesburg last night. This was the most by any university. Four of the awards were for NMMU’s flash mob which has been viewed by more than 110,000 people around the globe on YouTube.

2,026 Impressions 1.18% Feedback

- NMMU’s choir is internationally acclaimed and has won several international awards.

1,765 Impressions 0.62% Feedback

42 The NMMU brand reflects sophistication

- NMMU a step ahead with new Rototest Dynamometer (13 September 2011)

www.nmmu.ac.za

HIGH speed performance vehicles can now be tested without any slippage occurring between the wheel and drum thanks to a new Rototest dynamometer purchased from Sweden by Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University...

2,895 Impressions 0.07% Feedback

- The new library on the Missionvale Campus is one of the first buildings in South Africa to incorporate the DALI (digital address lighting interface) system making it a truly “green” building. The DALI system relies on sensors to control the lighting levels within the building. Lighting and air-conditioning on the South Campus library have been improved with the same technology.
The NMMU brand is superior to competition

- The Mecer NMMU Madibaz are the national cricket club champions!!

Congratulations to our Researcher of the Year, Prof Richard Cowling of the Faculty of Science and our Teacher of the Year, Dr Andre du Plessis of the Faculty of Education.

NMMU was recently catapulted to the forefront of global nanoscience research with the arrival of a state-of-the-art atomic resolution electron microscope from Japan. The High Resolution Transmission Electron Microscope (HRTEM) is the first of its kind that has been sold commercially outside of Japan and the last of a suite of four electron microscopes, costing a total R90-million installed at NMMU. In the photo: (left to right) Prof Jan Neethling, Dr Jaco Olivier (who received his PhD in April), PhD student Arno Janse van Vuuren and Prof Mike Lehy – all from NMMU’s Physics Department.

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Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University is the top university nationally in terms of brand, corporate publications and marketing campaigns. NMMU won 15 awards at the annual Marketing, Advancement and Communication in Education’s (MACE)Excellence Awards evening at Misty Hills outside Johannesburg last night. This was the most by any university. Four of the awards were for NMMU’s flash mob which has been viewed by more than 110 000 people around the globe on YouTube.

The NMMU brand is resilient (strong)

- Incorporated in other postings

PERFORMANCE

- Top achievers are awarded through a merit award system or the Vice-Chancellor’s Scholarship awards, which is the highest value bursaries given by a public
NMMU delivers on promises to university in South Africa.

NMMU offers extended curriculum programmes to provide access for underprepared students, as well as a range of academic support programmes and student services. Comprehensive financial aid packages are available to assist financially needy and academically deserving students.

The NMMU brand reflects a good value for money.

Top achievers are awarded through a merit award system or the Vice-Chancellor's Scholarship awards, which is the highest value bursaries given by a public university in South Africa.

The NMMU brand exceeds expectations in terms of promises.

Top achievers are awarded through a merit award system or the Vice-Chancellor's Scholarship awards, which is the highest value bursaries given by a public university in South Africa.

The NMMU brand is performing well in terms of my expectations.

Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University asked: Do you believe that you get value for your money at NMMU?

- Yes: 27 votes (27 people)
- No: 30 votes (30 people)

Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University asked: If you already studying at NMMU - has the university met up to your expectations?

- Yes: 36 votes (36 people)
- No: 9 votes (9 people)

Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University asked: If you already studying at NMMU - has the university met up to your expectations?

- Yes: 36 votes (36 people)
- No: 9 votes (9 people)
The NMMU brand provides high quality academic programmes

- Congratulations to Roxanne Wolmarans -- the winner of our "Name the Student Newspaper competition". The winning name is NMMyou.

- The largest Architectural student event is taking place this week at NMMU. The event is organised by the NNMU School of Architecture and its students. The focus will mainly be on sustainable architectural development and the role of people in changing mindsets and addressing preconceived notions of lifestyle. Check out [www.architectureza.org](http://www.architectureza.org) for more information.

- Do not miss today's Guitar Lunch Hour Concert

  The NMMU Department of Music proudly presents a Guitar Lunch Hour Studio Concert. Students from Dr's Bower and Nock and Kurt Trytsman will be performing.

  Time: 13:00  
  Venue: NMMU, South Campus Auditorium.

  Entrance to the concert is free

- Congratulations to the School of ITC for winning the Algoa Fm "Worn to be Wild" casual day competition.

- Last chance - Survey closes tomorrow 23 September: A specialised website for mobile devices will be created as part of ICT Web Services Content Management System migration project. This site will only show NMMU content that students and staff would want to see via their cell phones. You can provide feedback on what you consider is relevant by filling in the NMMU Website Mobile Device Survey, and you stand the chance of winning one of two 2GB iPod Shuffles. Follow the link provided on the e-mail received via your NMMU e-mail account this morning!

- DID YOU KNOW: Quality higher education is offered to more than 25 000 students across six campuses, making NMMU the largest university in the Eastern and Southern Cape.

- DID YOU KNOW: NMMU is one of six comprehensive universities in South Africa, offering both general and professionally orientated university programmes as well as technologically and career oriented programmes, from entrance level (certificate) through to research level (PhD).
• Join us for the “Be more than a number” postgrad campaign competition today outside the Kraal area on South. Promoters will hand out free coffee from 11:00 onwards. Each cup will have a unique code – if your code is read out, you could roll the dice and win a great prize which includes a high end laptop, iPad, Blackberry Torch, Edgars vouchers, van Schalk vouchers and KFC vouchers.

2,474 Impressions 0.44% Feedback

• Our BCom graduates’ results in the South African Institute of Chartered Accountants (SAICA) professional exams are consistently above the national average. Well done NMMU accounting school.

2,054 Impressions 1.12% Feedback

The NMMU brand always delivers academic services on time

The exam timetable is due to be out tomorrow afternoon. (12 October 2011)
3,261 Impressions 1.44% Feedback

RELATIONSHIP

I prefer the NMMU brand to those of other Higher Education Institutions

Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University asked: Why did you choose NMMU as your choice of university? Choose one of the options or feel free to leave a comment if there is something else that drew you to the university.

Convenience 3 people
3 votes

Location 25 people
25 votes

Value for money (Affordable fees) 1 person
1 vote

Close to home 11 people
11 votes

Good reputation of the university 17 people
17 votes

1,358 Impressions 0% Feedback
52 The NMMU brand makes me feel part of the institution

- Ubuntu: Respect you fellow human being, treat them fairly, disagree with them honestly, enjoy their friendship, explore your thoughts about another candidly, work together for a common goal and help one another to achieve it. And always remember that compassion is a central part of ubuntu and what we strive to achieve both in and outside NMMU.

2,211 Impressions 0.68% Feedback

53 The NMMU brand identity is strongly established in the mind of stakeholders

- Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University asked: Can you identify the NMMU logo or slogan by only seeing one of the elements?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>45 votes</td>
<td>2 votes</td>
</tr>
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</table>

1,575 Impressions 0% Feedback

- Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University asked: Do you believe the NMMU brand stand out from other universities?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>25 votes</td>
<td>32 votes</td>
</tr>
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</table>

2,483 Impressions 0% Feedback

- Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University asked: Can you identify the NMMU logo from a group of university logos?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>40 votes</td>
<td>2 votes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2,598 Impressions 0% Feedback
ANNEXURE D: TIMELINE FOR DATA COLLECTION
ANNEXURE D
TIMELINE FOR DATA COLLECTION

May

During the month of May

- The questionnaires were evaluated by Beverley Erickson for the Marketing and Corporate Relations office, Prof. Elmarie Venter (Supervisor) to ensure that the statements are correctly termed and that it could be created online and published to the students. During this period the researcher determined possible postings that can be made on Facebook to support the dependent, intermediate and independent variables of the proposed hypothesised model (Annexure A).

- The researcher approached lecturers in the Business Management Department at NMMU, requesting permission to approach the students in class and ask whether they will be willing to participate in the research study by providing their details on the forms that were circulated (Annexure E).

9th
Start with the creation of the hard copies of the two questionnaires to be completed by the two sample groups (the registered and non-registered Facebook users and the student who ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook).

23rd

The questionnaire for the students who ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook were created online utilising the online survey creation tool on the Staff portal of the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University.

25th

The questionnaire for the registered and non-registered students was created online utilising the online survey creation tool on the Staff portal of the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University.

27th

An email was created to attract and motivate students to participate in the study and was sent out to all students at all campuses. 91 people replied to the email by providing their details (Annexure F).

June

During the month of June

The researcher approached lecturers in the Business Management Department at NMMU, requesting permission to approach the students in class and ask whether they will be willing to participate in the research study by providing their details on the forms that were circulated (Annexure F).

20th

A Facebook posting was made requesting people to leave their telephone number and email address as a comment when they are willing to participate in the study, where after their details were added to the data base and mailing list.

22nd

Another posting was made on Facebook to remind people to participate leave a comment and participate in the research study.

22nd

On the 22nd of June emails was sent out to students of the registered and non-registered group of participants requesting them to ‘like’ the NMMU facebook
page and inform when they have done so. (To determine the students to email, the students who provided other email addresses (not NMMU addresses) as well as those with their names in mail and thereafter every second one of the remaining were chosen and emailed (Copy of the email for both groups attached in Annexure G).

July
7th
➢ A follow up email was sent to the students to request whether they will be willing to move to the Facebook group (i.e. ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook).

7th and 8th
➢ A check was done on the students who ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook to identify which students moved to the Facebook group.
➢ Another email was sent out to the students in the registered and non-registered sample group to request whether they will be willing to move to the NMMU Facebook group.

15th
➢ Another check was done on the students who ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook to identify which students moved to the Facebook group.

28th
➢ An email was sent out to thank all the students who accepted the request to ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook and move to the sample group of students who ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook.

August
First days of August
➢ The researcher approached lecturers in the Business Management Department at NMMU, requesting permission to approach the students in class and ask whether they will be willing to participate in the research study by providing their details on the forms that were circulated (Annexure F).

5th and 6th
Send out the questionnaires to the 348 students who indicated their willingness to participate in the research study in both the sample groups (the registered and non-registered Facebook users and the student who ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook) (Annexure A).

15th

- A follow up was made to determine who completed the first questionnaire for the research study.
- A second email was sent out requesting the students to complete the questionnaire that was emailed to them.

26th

- A follow up was made to identify how many students have completed the first questionnaire.
- A third reminder email was sent to all students who indicated their willingness to participate in the study, requesting them to complete the first questionnaire.

29th

- A follow up was made to identify how many students have completed the first questionnaire.
- A fourth reminder email was sent to all students who indicated their willingness to participate in the study, requesting them to complete the first questionnaire.

September

3rd and 4th

- A SMS was sent out to both the sample groups (the registered and non-registered Facebook users and the student who ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook), requesting them to follow the link on the SMS and complete the first questionnaire for the study.

6th

- Another email was sent out to both the sample groups (the registered and non-registered Facebook users and the student who ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook), to request them to complete the questionnaire if they have not done so already.

9th

- A follow up was made to identify how many students have completed the first questionnaire. In the control group (registered and non-registered Facebook users) 51 students completed the first questionnaire. In the experimental group
(students who ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook) 49 students completed the first questionnaire.

- The data from both sample groups’ questionnaires were extracted to excel spreadsheets.

13th

- The Facebook postings aimed at informing students about various aspects of the university in an attempt to improve their view on the NMMU brand started (Annexure C).
- Informed students to continue to look at their Facebook profiles on a regular basis (Annexure G).

19th

- A reminder email was sent out to the sample group who ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook to remind them to view their Facebook profiles and the postings made by NMMU on their Facebook page on a regular basis.

23rd

- A reminder email was sent out to the sample group who ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook to remind them to view their Facebook profiles and the postings made by NMMU on their Facebook page on a regular basis.

27th

- A reminder email was sent out to the sample group who ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook to remind them to view their Facebook profiles and the postings made by NMMU on their Facebook page on a regular basis (Annexure G).

29th

- A reminder email was sent out to the sample group who ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook to remind them to view their Facebook profiles and the postings made by NMMU on their Facebook page on a regular basis (Annexure G).

13th – 30th

- Throughout this time period between two and five Facebook postings relating to the independent variables of the study was made by the researcher on a daily basis. Furthermore, the researcher visited the NMMU Facebook page on a daily basis to view the response of the students to the postings that was made (Annexure C).

October
Throughout this time period between two and five Facebook postings relating to the independent variables of the study was made by the researcher on a daily basis. Furthermore, the researcher visited the NMMU Facebook page on a daily basis to view the response of the students to the postings that was made (Annexure C).

Although the questionnaire that was given to the students to complete in both rounds of questioning was exactly the same, a new online questionnaire had to be created for both sample groups as the published questionnaire cannot be administered twice. Therefore, another questionnaire was created for the registered and non-registered students for publishing and completion.

The second questionnaire for the students who ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook for publishing and completion was created (Annexure A).

The last Facebook postings were placed on the NMMU Facebook page (Annexure C).

A posting was placed on the NMMU Facebook page to thank the students for participating and remind them to complete the second questionnaire.

The first emails was sent out the two sample groups (the registered and non-registered Facebook users and the student who ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook), requesting them to complete the second questionnaire for the study (Annexure C & G).

A second reminder email was sent out the two sample groups (the registered and non-registered Facebook users and the student who ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook), requesting them to complete the second questionnaire for the study (Annexure G).
31st
>
A third reminder email was sent out to the two sample groups (the registered and non-registered Facebook users and the student who ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook), requesting them to complete the second questionnaire for the study (Annexure G).

November
1st
>
A fourth reminder email was sent out to the two sample groups (the registered and non-registered Facebook users and the student who ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook), requesting them to complete the second questionnaire for the study (Annexure G).

3rd
>
A fifth reminder email was sent out to the two sample groups (the registered and non-registered Facebook users and the student who ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook), requesting them to complete the second questionnaire for the study (Annexure G).

4th
>
A SMS was sent out to both the sample groups (the registered and non-registered Facebook users and the student who ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook), requesting them to follow the link on the SMS and complete the first questionnaire for the study.
ANNEXURE E: REQUEST FOR STUDENTS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE STUDY (CLASS VISITS)
ANNEXURE E

REQUEST FOR STUDENTS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE STUDY (CLASS VISITS)

I, Ilze Visser, went to some of the first, second and third year business management students’ classes with the permission of the lecturers in order to motivate and ask the students whether they will be willing to participate in the study. These recruited students forms part of my one sample group, namely the students that do not ‘like’ the NMMU page on Facebook.

The presentation given to them:

Good day students, I am Ilze Visser and I am currently doing my masters at NMMU. The purpose of my study is to determine what your views and perceptions are on the brand image of the university.
I am here to ask you whether you will be interested to participate in my experiment. In order for you to be able to participate you may or may not have a Facebook profile. The only requirement however is that you are not allowed to 'like' the NMMU page on Facebook.

If you are willing and interested in assisting me with my study will you please complete the forms that will be circulated by providing us with your name, surname, email address and cell phone number.

I can assure you that your information will be treated with utmost confidentiality and will not be given out to anyone. It is just for me to build up my database and send out the questionnaires to you.

Thank you

ANNEXURE F: EMAIL SENT OUT TO STUDENTS REQUESTING THEM TO PARTICIPATE IN THE STUDY
ANNEXURE F

EMAIL SENT OUT TO STUDENTS REQUESTING THEM TO PARTICIPATE IN THE STUDY

Do you want to win this camera?
Complete our survey and you stand a chance of winning
1 of 2
Olympus digital camera packs

?!? So what do you have to do ?!??

1. Tell us what your view of the NMMU brand is

2. To do this, you will need to complete two questionnaires that we will send to you – one now and one in four months’ time. That’s all it takes!

3. **Reply via this link with your name and cell number.**

- Your details will be KEPT CONFIDENTIAL
- Photo is for illustration purposes only
  - Terms and conditions apply

**ANNEXURE G: EMAILS SENT TO STUDENTS FOR REQUESTS AND COMPLETION OF QUESTIONNAIRES**
ANNEXURE G

EMAILS SENT TO STUDENTS FOR REQUESTS AND COMPLETION OF QUESTIONNAIRES

22, 24 June 2011 and 7 July 2011 mail requesting students to change to the NMMU Facebook page (experimental group)
Dear Student,

I am currently conducting my masters on "THE IMPACT THAT SOCIAL MEDIA HAS ON THE BRAND IMAGE OF THE NELSON MANDELA METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY."

You indicated your willingness to participate in the study either by providing us with your details in class or via email as a response to the email sent out requesting participation in the study.

We are currently trying to gather students who will form part of our experimental group, meaning student who "LIKE" the NMMU page on Facebook. Although you are not currently part of the NMMU Facebook, I am kindly requesting whether you will please go onto the NMMU Facebook page and "LIKE" the page. **Will you please be willing to assist me in my study as the success of the study is at risk if I do not get enough students in this sample group.**

Please follow the link provided:

http://www.facebook.com/NMMU4U

What will be expected of you when you "LIKE" the NMMU Facebook page to stand in line to win 1 of 2 OLYMPUS CAMERA GIFT PACKS, is that you will have to visit the NMMU Facebook page on a regular basis.

Once you have liked the NMMU Facebook page, the first questionnaire will be sent to you via email for completion.

Your assistance in this regard is much appreciated.

Kind regards

Ilze Visser
Dear STUDENT'S NAME

Thank you very much for indicating your willingness to participate in my study. I did receive your details and the first questionnaire will be forwarded to you shortly for completion.
Have a good weekend
Kind regards
Ilze Visser

5 and 15 August 2011 - Email requesting respondents to complete the 1st questionnaire – experimental group (student who ‘like’ the NMMU Facebook page)
Dear NMMU student,

The Centre for Applied Management Sciences (CAMS) is a research unit functioning under the auspices of the Department of Business Management at Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU). The CAMS is currently (2011) conducting research on the impact that social media has on the brand image of a higher education institution (HEI) with the sample being NMMU students. This questionnaire is designed to obtain information to assess the brand image of NMMU and may form the basis for practical and corrective steps to facilitate the higher education institution (HEI) to improve its brand image, through paying attention to key branding and social media elements.

The questionnaire should not take longer than 15 - 20 minutes to complete. There is no right or wrong answers only your opinion is important!

Please complete the questionnaire, which has been compiled to determine your perceptions in this regard. All information will be used for research purposes only. The confidentiality of your opinions will be respected.

Thank you for your co-operation. We hope that you will find the questionnaire interesting and stimulating. Your participation in completing this questionnaire is entirely voluntary and details of your participation will be kept strictly confidential.

The following website will automatically link you to the electronic questionnaire:

http://www.nmmu.ac.za/websurvey/q.asp?sid=317&k=giqobduasn

Thank you once again for your willingness to contribute to the success of this important research project.

Please submit the completed questionnaire by 11 AUGUST 2011.
PLEASE NOTE: IN ORDER TO STAND IN LINE TO WIN THE OLYMPUS CAMERA GIFT PACKS AND SUCCESSFULLY PARTICIPATE IN THE STUDY YOU ARE REQUIRED TO COMPLETE TWO QUESTIONNAIRES, ONE BEING COMPLETE NOW AND ONE THAT WILL BE SENT TO YOU AT A LATER STAGE OF THE YEAR.

Yours faithfully
Ilze Visser
Masters student
Faculty of Business and Economic Sciences

6 and 15 August 2011 - Email requesting respondents to complete the 1st questionnaire – control group (registered and non-registered Facebook users)

Dear NMMU student,
The Centre for Applied Management Sciences (CAMS) is a research unit functioning under the auspices of the Department of Business Management at Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU). The CAMS is currently (2011) conducting research on the impact that social media has on the brand image of a higher education institution (HEI) with the sample being NMMU students. This questionnaire is designed to obtain information to assess the brand image of NMMU and may form the basis for practical and corrective steps to facilitate the higher education institution (HEI) to improve its brand image, through paying attention to key branding and social media elements.

The questionnaire should not take longer than 15 - 20 minutes to complete. There is no right or wrong answers only your opinion is important!

Please complete the questionnaire, which has been compiled to determine your perceptions in this regard. All information will be used for research purposes only. The confidentiality of your opinions will be respected.

Thank you for your co-operation. We hope that you will find the questionnaire interesting and stimulating. Your participation in completing this questionnaire is entirely voluntary and details of your participation will be kept strictly confidential.

The following website will automatically link you to the electronic questionnaire:

http://www.nmmu.ac.za/websurvey/q.asp?sid=325&k=ouyycrynfh

Thank you once again for your willingness to contribute to the success of this important research project.

Please submit the completed questionnaire by 11 AUGUST 2011.

PLEASE NOTE: IN ORDER TO STAND IN LINE TO WIN THE OLYMPUS CAMERA GIFT PACKS AND SUCCESSFULLY PARTICIPATE IN THE STUDY
YOU ARE REQUIRED TO COMPLETE TWO QUESTIONNAIRES, ONE BEING COMPLETE NOW AND ONE THAT WILL BE SENT TO YOU AT A LATER STAGE OF THE YEAR.

Yours faithfully
Ilze Visser
Masters student
Faculty of Business and Economic Sciences

26 and 29 August 2011 - Email requesting respondents to complete the 1st questionnaire – experimental group (student who ‘like’ the NMMU Facebook page)

Dear students,

For those of you that have already completed the questionnaire, thank you very much for your participation and please do not complete the questionnaire again. If you have not yet completed the questionnaire, will you please be so kind and follow the link to the questionnaire and complete the questionnaire.
I am experiencing trouble in acquiring sufficient numbers for my study and would appreciate it if you would please take the time to complete the questionnaire.

Thank you for your co-operation. We hope that you will find the questionnaire interesting and stimulating. Your participation in completing this questionnaire is entirely voluntary and details of your participation will be kept strictly confidential.

The following website will automatically link you to the electronic questionnaire:

http://www.nmmu.ac.za/websurvey/q.asp?sid=317&k=giqobduasn

Thank you once again for your willingness to contribute to the success of this important research project.

Yours faithfully

Ilze Visser
Masters student
Faculty of Business and Economic Sciences

26 and 29 August 2011 - Email requesting respondents to complete the 1st questionnaire – control group (registered and non-registered Facebook users)

Dear students,

For those of you that have already completed the questionnaire, thank you very much for your participation and please do not complete the questionnaire again. If you have not yet completed the questionnaire, will you please be so kind and follow the link to the questionnaire and complete the questionnaire.
I am experiencing trouble in acquiring sufficient numbers for my study and would appreciate it if you would please take the time to complete the questionnaire.

Thank you for your co-operation. We hope that you will find the questionnaire interesting and stimulating. Your participation in completing this questionnaire is entirely voluntary and details of your participation will be kept strictly confidential.

The following website will automatically link you to the electronic questionnaire:

http://www.nmmu.ac.za/websurvey/q.asp?sid=325&k=ouycyrfhu

Thank you once again for your willingness to contribute to the success of this important research project.

Yours faithfully
Ilze Visser
Masters student
Faculty of Business and Economic Sciences

6 September 2011 - Email requesting respondents to complete the 1st questionnaire – experimental group (student who ‘like’ the NMMU Facebook page)

Dear students,

I am experiencing trouble in acquiring sufficient numbers for my study and need to start with the next step in my study as soon as possible. I would really appreciate it if you would please take the time to complete the questionnaire. Without your help I will not be able to complete my study as the success depends on your responses.
Thank you for your co-operation. We hope that you will find the questionnaire interesting and stimulating. Your participation in completing this questionnaire is entirely voluntary and details of your participation will be kept strictly confidential.

The following website will automatically link you to the electronic questionnaire:

http://www.nmmu.ac.za/websurvey/q.asp?sid=317&k=giqobduasn

Thank you once again for your willingness to contribute to the success of this important research project.

Yours faithfully
Ilze Visser
Masters student
Faculty of Business and Economic Sciences

6 September 2011 - Email requesting respondents to complete the 1st questionnaire – control group (registered and non-registered Facebook users)

Dear fellow students,

I am experiencing trouble in acquiring sufficient numbers for my study and need to start with the next step in my study as soon as possible. I would really appreciate it if you would please take the time to complete the questionnaire. Without your help I will not be able to complete my study as the success depends on your responses.
Thank you for your co-operation. We hope that you will find the questionnaire interesting and stimulating. Your participation in completing this questionnaire is entirely voluntary and details of your participation will be kept strictly confidential.

The following website will automatically link you to the electronic questionnaire:

http://www.nmmu.ac.za/websurvey/q.asp?sid=325&k=ouycrnfh

Thank you once again for your willingness to contribute to the success of this important research project.

Yours faithfully
Ilze Visser
Masters student
Faculty of Business and Economic Sciences

13, 27 September 2011 – Email to remind students of the experimental group (students who ‘like’ the NMMU Facebook page) to regularly visit the page

Dear fellow student

Thank you very much for indicating your willingness to participate in my study earlier this year and for completing my questionnaire. The postings on Facebook have started this week and will continue for about a month and a half.

PLEASE ACCESS THE NMMU FACEBOOK PAGE ON A REGULAR BASIS, PREFERABLY AT LEAST ONCE A DAY!!!
We will be postings on general aspects of the university and you are more than welcome to post questions that you want answered. Please participate by leaving comments and liking posts.

Kind regards
Ilze Visser

30 September 2011 - Email to remind students of the experimental group (students who ‘like’ the NMMU Facebook page) to regularly visit the page

Dear fellow student

Thank you very much for indicating your willingness to participate in my study.

PLEASE ACCESS THE NMMU FACEBOOK PAGE ON A REGULAR BASIS!!!

We will be making 2 - 4 posts a day for a period of about a month. PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE participate by liking the posts or leaving comments.

Kind regards
Ilze Visser

17, 21 and 31 October 2011 and 3 November 2011 - Email requesting respondents to complete the 2\textsuperscript{nd} questionnaire – experimental group (student who ‘like’ the NMMU Facebook page)

Dear Fellow Student,

Thank you very much for assisting me with my study thus far, I really do appreciate it. I am not in the last part of my data collection and I am kindly requesting that you would please complete the following questionnaire.

The questionnaire will take about 5 - 10 minutes to complete.
You will notice that the questionnaire is the same as the first one you have completed. PLEASE do not be guided by your answers to the first questionnaire, but rather by what you have observed and experienced through the Facebook postings.

Please follow the link below and complete the questionnaire:

http://www.nmmu.ac.za/websurvey/q.asp?sid=400&k=imxuktgyge

Thank you and have a wonderful afternoon.
Ilze Visser

17, 21 and 31 October 2011 and 3 November 2011 - Email requesting respondents to complete the 2nd questionnaire – control group (registered and non-registered Facebook users)

Dear Fellow Student,

Thank you very much for assisting me with my study thus far, I really do appreciate it. I am not in the last part of my data collection and I am kindly requesting that you would please complete the following questionnaire.

The questionnaire will take about 5 - 10 minutes to complete.

You will notice that the questionnaire is the same as the first one you have completed, so please do not think that you don’t have to complete it again. It is
meant to be the same and to obtain the results I need of you to complete it the questionnaire twice.

Please follow the link below and complete the questionnaire:

http://www.nmmu.ac.za/websurvey/q.asp?sid=397&k=gilrmyvjli

Thank you and have a wonderful afternoon.
Ilze Visser

1 November 2011 – Email informing students about the mistake on the questionnaire and request to complete the corrected question

Dear Fellow student,

My sincere apologies for requesting your help once again. I went over the questionnaire responses and realised that question 3.6 did not show all the option you could choose from. In order for my results to be valid and reliable I need to redo this question and 3.7 that links in with it.

Will you please take a minute and following the link to complete ONLY THOSE TWO QUESTIONS:

http://www.nmmu.ac.za/websurvey/q.asp?sid=406&k=lxfromqgcb
Thank you very much and once again, sorry for the inconvenience.

Ilze Visser

ANNEXURE H: FACEBOOK INSIGHTS RESULTS
FACEBOOK INSIGHTS - 13 September 2011 to 13 October 2011

OVERVIEW:

- **New likes**
The number of new people who have liked your Page. This data corresponds to 13/09/2011 - 13/10/2011.

  239 28% **Compared to: 13/08/2011 - 12/09/2011**

- **Lifetime likes**
The total number of people who have liked your Page. This data corresponds to 13/10/2011.

  3,089

**Active Users**
Active Users 1-day, 7-day, and 30-day counts of people who have interacted with or viewed your Page or its posts. This data corresponds to 13/09/2011 - 13/10/2011.
Interactions

- **Post views**
  - The number of times people have viewed a News Feed story posted by your Page. This includes people who have liked your Page and people who haven’t. This data corresponds to 13/09/2011 - 13/10/2011.

  **172,987**  
  **↑145% Compared to: 13/08/2011 - 12/09/2011**

- **Post feedback**
  - The number of likes and comments made on News Feed stories posted by your Page. This data corresponds to 13/09/2011 - 13/10/2011.

  **1,139**  
  **↑43% Compared to: 13/08/2011 - 12/09/2011**

- **Page content feedback**
  - The number of likes and comments made on News Feed stories posted by your Page. Detailed information about per-post feedback can be found on the Page Posts table in the Interactions tab. This data corresponds to 13/09/2011 - 13/10/2011.

  - **Likes**  
  - **Comments**