Social media use in Small and Medium Enterprises: A case of fashion industry growth

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Abstract

This paper aims to examine how social identity, perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use influence the use of social media and thus growth of fashion SMEs in Kenya. The study was informed by Social Identity Theory, Technology Acceptance Model and Theory of Planned Behavior. A survey of 394 SMEs owner-managers from Nairobi and Kiambu counties using a structured questionnaire was conducted and data analyzed using structural equations modeling techniques. The findings show that social identity and perceived ease of use bear a significant influence on the usage of social media whereas perceived usefulness showed no significance in influencing owner-managers' intention to use social media. The use of social media on the other hand had a significant influence on SME growth. Social media usage is considered useful in business but according to the study, there's no motivation towards usage by the owner-mangers. Policy makers can therefore provide an enabling environment to encourage social media promotion especially for SMEs. The fashion industry in Kenya was also found to be highly dominated by the females as opposed to males with most of them employing the use of Facebook as opposed to other social media platforms. Further studies could find out why fashion dealers prefer to use Facebook more than any other social media platforms. Most of the existing research into the use of social media in business has almost exclusively investigated its use by large corporations. However, as there are low barriers to the use of social media, this paper examines how SMEs can make use of social media in the same ways that large corporates can, without the need for extensive resources.

Key Words: *Social Media, SMEs, Fashion, Growth*

Introduction

Small and Medium size Enterprises are considered engines for incomes and employment growth in Kenya because they create over 80% of Kenya's employment (Republic of Kenya, 2012). A national economic survey report by the Central Bank of Kenya indicate that SMEs constitute 98% of all business in Kenya as well as contribute 3% of the GDP (CBK, 2017). Yet, even with its immense contribution to the economy, Kenya's SMEs are faced with numerous challenges in the current business environment, key challenge being the rapid changes and usage of new technologies to foster their growth (Kisato *et,al*. 2016). Social media is one of the fastest-growing promotion channels in the world used by both SMEs and large organizations (Coremetrics, 2010). Social media use in business involves the use of social networking sites for promotion purposes to persuade consumers that one's company, products and/or services are worthwhile.

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According to *Social Media Marketing Industry Report*, 64% of marketers spend five hours or more per week on social media and 39% of them spend ten hours or more weekly (Stelzner, 2011). He further notes that these findings show that more and more companies are becoming actively involved in social media, which also shows the emerging of social media sites as the new promotion platform.

This trend reflects a paradigm shift in many facets such as promotion from the use of traditional media such as television, newspapers, radio, and magazines which are one way, static broadcasting technologies to interactive, narrowly targeted approaches that focus on the customer (Pentina *et al*., 2012). However, while the significance of social media in business is being acknowledged, the decision to use this new promotional technology by SMEs is not automatic (Pentina *et al*., 2012). Abou-Shouk *et al*. (2013) argue that SMEs, particularly from developing countries, are slow adopters and users of social media. Further studies point out that SMEs are still found to struggle with usage of social media while it is particularly suitable for them because of its minimal cost, low barriers to participation, mobility and low level of skills required to use it (Breslauer *et al*., 2009; Toole, 2011; Durkin *et al*., 2013). Research into the use of social media promotion produced so far has almost exclusively investigated its use by large corporations (Constantinides *et al*, 2008; Bughin, 2008, Dupre-Barnes and Barnes, 2009). However, as there are low barriers to the use of social media, SMEs can make use of social media in the same ways that large corporates can, without the need for extensive resources (Jagongo and Kinyua, 2013).
In the Kenyan fashion industry, studies have revealed that textile, apparel and clothing industry in Kenya are the major players in the country's SME sector (Wandaka, 2009). Wandaka (2009) further indicates that the fashion industry in Kenya has been among the first to embrace the use of social media. The advent of social media promotion has brought in new marketing opportunities that could resolve promotional challenges faced by fashion SMEs (Chaffey, 2008). In sub-Saharan Africa and in particular Kenya, one of the main challenges facing fashion SMEs is promotion, (Kisato et, al. 2016). Thus, the use of social media could result into more promotion and thus growth.

Further to this, prior studies indicate that attitude is a key factor in analysis of ICT usage (Davis, 1989; Davis *et al*., 1989; Kuo and Yen, 2009; Liao *et al*., 2007; Lu *et al*., 2009). Owner-managers of SMEs who participate in social networking sites can develop affective ties with their customers which in turn influence their attitude (Gruen *et al*., 2006). The exchange of information on social media platforms has an effect on SMEs owner-mangers attitudes which greatly shapes their usage of social media for business purposes (Soderlund and Rosegren, 2007). While studying social media, attitude cannot be ignored as it's an important factor in defining social media usage and the extent to which users can engage each other because it explains the affective, behavioral and cognitive components that explains preference or rejection by users (Rafael *et al*., 2013).

Prior studies have shown that social identity theory contributes to social media use in various ways. Madrigal (2001) investigated the direct and indirect effects of social identity on the use of social media in a corporate context and found out that customer identification toward a company was reported to contribute to a higher level of desired behavioural outcomes such as customer loyalty and willingness to purchase (Ahearne, Bhattacharya, and Gruen, 2005; Bhattacharya and Sen, 2003; Homburg, Wieseke, and Hoyer, 2009; Huang, Phau, and Lin, 2010). Although investigations on the direct effect of social identity on SME engagement in social media usage

appear to be limited, the reported relationships between affective factors, including emotional support and commitments, supports that social identity plays a key role in driving the intention to use and the actual usage of social media (Gupta, Kim, and Shin, 2010; Liang, Ho, Li, and Turban, 2011).

Owner-managers' perception on the other hand has also been identified as a significant predictor of consumer predisposition towards the use of ICT and specifically social media (Chen, 2006; Lubbe, 2007; Kamarulzaman, 2007; Kim *et al*., 2009). Davis (1989) and Davis *et al*., (1989) further explain that people tend to use or not use an application because of the extent they believe it will help them perform their job better (perceived usefulness). Also, even if potential users believe that a given application is useful, they may, at the same time, believe that the systems is too hard or easy to use and that the performance benefits of usage are out-weighed by the effort of using the application (perceived ease of use). Perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use are key in describing acceptance of ICT. Researchers (e.g. Koufaris, 2002) validated these constructs because they were found to influence ICT usage, however, the study proposed further studies on the adoption of these constructs on the adoption and use of social media for promotion purposes.

Given the speed of its development, social media usage has outpaced the development of current academic research and its adoption among business in particular the SMEs (Kietzmann *et al*., 2012). Such that, both the theory and practice about the use and adoption of social media is inadequate (Durkin *et al*., 2013) Hogath-Scott *et al*. (1996) argued that, research about promotion practices among SMEs managers identifies underutilization and poor understanding among owner-managers as hindering the promotion undertakings among SMEs.

From a theoretical perspective, this study identifies social identity as a key influencing factor in the study of usage of social media. Furthermore, existing research suggests that social identity has multiple dimensions including cognitive, affective, and evaluative which are shown to have a positive influence on social media usage (Wang, 2017). However, in the study of technology usage and especially the use of social media, attitudinal and behavioral theories; TAM and TPB have been extensively used with a very high dominance (Lee *et al*., 2003, Hoof *et al*., 2005). This doesn't ignore the immense contributions that these theories have brought in such studies. However, social identity theory being an equally attitudinal theory explains social media usage as well but it seems to be left out (Wang, 2017).

Literature on social media promotion reveals a dominance of works from Europe, Asia and America, with little representation from Africa (Botha *et al*., 2011; Zeng and Gerritsen, 2014), for instance; Ireland (Durkin *et al*., 2013;), Australia (Gligorijevic and Leong, 2011;), France (Nakara *et al*., 2012;), USA (Pentina *et al*., 2012). Little evidence exists on the subject, especially from developing markets in Africa (Ainin *et al*., 2015). Jagongo and Kinyua (2013) supports this as they argue that survey in Africa shows that a lower number SMEs have taken the advantage of social media for promotion purposes as opposed to their counterparts in developed economies. Past researches (Sheng and Zolfagharian, 2014; Pentina *et al*., 2012; Lee *et al*., 2006; Koufaris, 2002) have largely indicated how attitudes of consumers influences their usage of social media. The same studies showed a significant relationship between attitudes and repeated use of social media but none of these researches examined how attitudes influenced the usage of social media.

Theoretical context

The study was guided by Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) and Social Identity Theory (SIT). TAM essentially describes how users of technology come to accept and use the technology. Davis (1989) developed TAM which specifies the causal relationships between system design features, perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, attitude toward using and actual usage behavior. He further suggests that when users are presented with a new technology, the decision about how and when to use it is influenced by the following factors; perceived usefulness – the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would enhance his/her job performance and perceived ease of use – the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would be free from effort. TAM has been used in a number of research in social media use (Sheng and Zolfagharian, 2014; Pavlou, 2003; Pentina *et al*., 2012; Lee *et al*., 2006; Koufaris, 2002). These studies have supported that the use of social media is anchored on perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use. Perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use influences an individual's attitudes toward using social media (intention). According to TAM, intentions to use technology will determine whether a person will use the technology or not (behavior).

Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) extends Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) by adding perceived behavioral control as an additional determinant of intention and behavior. TPB claims that behavior is a direct function of behavioral intention which is determined by three factors; attitude, subjective norm and perceived behavioral control. Ajzen (1991) reviewed several studies using TPB model and stated that attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavioral control are usually found to predict behavioral intentions with a high degree of accuracy. TPB has been successfully been applied to understand individual acceptance and usage of technologies (Harrison *et al*., 1997). Social Identity Theory (SIT) suggests that people define themselves based on personal and social aspects (Tajfel, 1982). Personal identity depicts a person's distinct characteristics, including personal traits and abilities. The social aspect (i.e., social identification) refers to the perception of belonging to a human group (Ashforth and Mael, 1989). Tajfel (1981) defined social identity as that part of an individual's self-concept, which derives from his knowledge of his membership of a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership. This commonly accepted definition indicates the following three necessary components for an individual to develop identification with a group; (a) cognitive, (b) evaluative, and (c) affective dimension. The merit of this operationalization on social identification is that social identity generally supports positive associations with participation behaviour, i.e., the intention to use and actual usage of social media (Dholakia *et al*., 2004; Lee *et al*., 2011). This theory therefore supports this study by showcasing individuals behaviours in identifying themselves with the usage of social media.

Users of social media participate to satisfy three types of needs: functional needs (to carry out certain activities); social needs (willingness to provide help and support, exchange ideas) and psychological needs (belonging to a community, membership). Leung and Wei (1998) supports this by identifying the motivation concerning the need to be fashionable. That is why users of certain innovations see themselves as symbols of status and social identity, helping them to reinforce their sense of belonging to a group. Social networking sites are both a socialization tool and an expression of identity. Social networking sites enable users to manage their desired self-image and keep up to date with the latest trends. When members emotionally commit to a social

group, they are more likely to perform in-group behaviours, such as patronage to online communities in the social media context. In addition, empirical evidence from a recent survey of young social media users suggests that users who are emotionally involved with an online group are more likely to actively use social media than those with less emotional involvement (Hadad, 2015).

Attitudes, Perceived Ease of Use and Perceived Usefulness

Attitude refers to the individual's general predisposition towards a given behavior and is the result of individual beliefs concerning the behavior and its results and the importance attached to such beliefs. Thus, attitude is an individual's positive or negative evaluation of a given object or behavior (Ajzen, 1991; Fishben and Ajzen, 1975) and includes feelings or affective responses towards the object or behavior, behavioral and cognitive components that explains preference or rejection by users. Chuttur (2009) further suggests that attitudes in social media usage would make the user feel that the decision to use social media is either good/bad, wise/foolish, favourable/unfavourable, beneficial/harmful or positive/negative. In the context of this study, attitude can be understood as a user's favorable or unfavorable predisposition towards social networking site use. Studies emphasize that attitude to use information technology is a key factor in analysis of technology usage behavior (Davis, 1989; Davis *et al.*, 1989; Kuo and Yen, 2009; Liao *et al.*, 2007; Lu *et al.*, 2009).

Users who participate in social networking sites can develop affective ties with other participants (Gruen *et al.*, 2006), which in turn influence their attitude. The exchange of information in social networking sites also modifies participants' attitudes (Soderlund and Rosegren, 2007). Lee *et al.* (2008) considers that comments from other users influence participants' attitudes positively or negatively. Positive attitude is therefore important for social media promotion to take place effectively. Most importantly, the owner-mangers need to have the right attitudes in order to use social media in their businesses as a promotional tool. The perceived ease of use of a technology should lead to greater usefulness of a technology. Perceived ease of use is specifically conceptualized by Davis (1989) to describe a system that is free of effort; the application user can navigate the system easily, while perceived usefulness is associated specifically with an individual improving their own job performance. Nevertheless, acceptance of a social networking website tool is very much dependent on ease of use and usefulness. Individual acceptance is a necessary condition to expand the use of the tool within particular social networks for providers to monetize individual use. Thus within a social networking website, the easier an individual finds a particular technology, the more positive the individual should feel toward that technology. This study will be instrumental in examining how perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use of social media influences the intention of using social media for promotion purposes and thus achieving growth in SMEs.

Growth of SMEs

Growth in small firms can be measured by various levels of sales growth over a defined period (percentage growth or comparison with other firms in the same industry) and/or employee growth. Barkham et al., (1996) agrees by arguing that a firm's growth may be measured according to its revenue, profits or by the amount of human and physical capital it employs. Revenue may be considered a precise indicator of how a firm is competing within a market and indeed firms themselves tend to use it as a measure of their own performance. Any analysis of

company growth should at least be based on changes in turnover (Barkham et al., 1996). However, there are other factors that influence growth of small firms such as founder characteristics, business practices, firm attributes and human resource practices (Barringer et al., 2005). This study will consider using sales, profitability and employment as indicators of growth because these measures are most widely perceived as measures of growth in empirical growth research (Delmar, 1997). Growth in sales and employees are the most commonly measured factors in studies of growth (Wiklund and Shepherd, 2003).

Hypothesis Development
Because social media promotions evolve from social interactions developed in social media platforms, purchase behavior is less likely to occur without use behavior being observed (Wang, 2017). Compared with inactive users, active members are more likely to engage in usage behavior. In other words, this study regards usage behavior as in-group behavior of members to satisfy their need to identify with the group in the social media context. Considering the evaluative dimension of social identity, this research supposes that once the group member forms a positive value connotation to the social group and evaluates this membership to be valuable, this individual is more likely to conduct in-group behavior as a support to the group and to increase self-worth.

Prior research suggested that mere categorization into a social group is not always accompanied by emotional commitment to the group; thus, in-group behavior is not a natural outcome. When members emotionally commit to a social group, they are more likely to perform in-group behaviors, such as patronage to online communities in the social media context. In addition, empirical evidence from a recent survey of young social media users suggests that users who are emotionally involved with an online group are more likely to actively use social media than those with less emotional involvement (Hadad, 2015). On the other hand, the cognitive dimension represents a conscious awareness of one's membership in a social group. Without this membership awareness, individuals have no foundation on which to define their social identity. Once this base is well established, the desired outcome behaviors may then be observed. The overall effect of social identity generally supports positive associations with participation behaviour, i.e., the intention to use and the actual usage of social media in promotion (Dholakia *et al*., 2004; Lee *et al*., 2011). Therefore, in light of the affective, cognitive, and evaluative dimension of social identity, this study proposes that each dimension exerts a positive effect on both intentions to use and actual usage of social media on promotion. Thus, the following hypothesis is put forth;

H1: *Social identity elements influence the use of social media in SMEs*

Perceived usefulness defines prospective user's subjective probability that using a specific application improves operations (Lu *et al.*, 2009). It provides diagnostic lenses into how actual use and intention to use are influenced. PU domiciles in Vroom's expectancy theory, as the decision to adopt and use an innovation is driven by its near-term and long-term expected results (Triandis, 1977). The near-term results are synonymous with postulates of PU; and the long-term consequences refer to the consequential results in one's career or social image, which reflects Rogers' (2003) most important motivation for adoption and use of innovation. The attainment of perceived near-term usefulness paves way for long-term usefulness. Chau (2001) did a similar work in decomposing the construct of PU into perceived near-term and perceived long-term in

his modified TAM and hypothesized that behavioral intentions are dependent on the above two variables and PEOU. Decomposing PU as Triandis (1977) and Chau (2001) did explicitly provide more specific lenses into understanding user perception of IT's usefulness. Jiang *et al.* (2000) further expanded PU by developing the utilization of the Internet technology model to explore user acceptance of Internet and proposed that Internet is positively related to perceived near-term and perceived long-term usefulness. Therefore, people tend to use or not use an application because of the extent they believe it will help them perform their job better. If social media is perceived useful there will exist a positive use-performance relationship. Perceived usefulness explains the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would enhance his/her job performance (Davis, 1989). Therefore, the following hypothesis is put forth:

H2: *Perceived usefulness of social media influence the use of social media in SMEs*

Perceived ease of use measures the prospective user's assessment of the mental efforts required of the use of the target applications (Davis,1993). Mental effortlessness demanded by an ICT attracts more adoption behavior; thus, innovations with perceived complexities of user interface and steep learning curve are thought risky to adopt (Opia, 2008). PEOU is a distinct but related construct to PU; it impacts on near-term usefulness, as improvement in it contributes positively to outcomes and ultimately defines PU. Studies (Davis, 1993; Chau, 2001) to assess observed usefulness and ease of use trade-off and to determine the impacts of external variables on these two mental determinants show mixed findings. Nevertheless, empirical findings confirm the positive relationships between ease of use and attitude towards use and show that PEOU is a proven key determinant of users' intention to accept ICT (Venkatesh and Davis, 2000). Clarke (2000) supported this when his survey of 800 professionals' ranks ease of use among the five factors that determine the use of wireless handheld devices. Thus, ease of use is a powerful determinant of intention to accept innovation; therefore, perceived ease of use is the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would be free of effort and thus if social media is perceived easy to use it is more likely to be accepted by users (Davis, 1989) and the following hypothesis is put forth:

H3: *Perceived ease of use of social media influence the use of social media in SMEs*

Users of media are habitually active, as well as goal-oriented, and are usually motivated to choose a medium that best gratifies their needs (Roy, 2009). Thus, a continual usage of a specific media is premised on the value that comes along with it, generally typified via user satisfaction. In accord with Burton-Jones and Gallivan (2007), we operationalize social media usage in the current study following the system-centered approach, where the measures of the system usage are based on the growth outcomes for which the system is employed. Social media researchers have enumerated a number of uses for social media by most firms. Notable among the uses are the quests to attract new customers, cultivate relationships, increase awareness, communicate the brand online, as well as receive feedback from customers and business partners (Michaelidou *et al*., 2011). Anecdotal evidence suggest that these are implemented as firms create communities, distribute content (Kumar *et al*., 2016) and increase traffic to their websites, in pursuit of identifying new business opportunities and building direct relationships with existing and

prospective clients to foster business growth and increase revenues (Breslauer *et al*., 2009; eMarketer, 2013).

The benefits associated with its usage are wide and varied. Empirically, Kwok and Yu (2013) have found that Facebook usage for instance increased sales of businesses. In addition to this, evidence of the benefits for using social media have been also provided by other scholars (Wamba and Carter, 2014; Aladwani, 2015). However, user behaviors vary on social media sites (Hughes *et al*., 2012), suggesting possible differences in outcomes across the enterprises. Nevertheless, by synthesizing these usage outcomes, it is evident that the overarching goal of social media usage is to enhance organizational performance, in both financial and non-financial terms (Ainin *et al*., 2015). These financial and non-financial outcomes ultimately become the resultant benefits firms obtain from using social media.

The use of social media has been found to improve business competitiveness, providing opportunities for SMEs to compete favorably (Chapman *et al*., 2010). The development of social media in the last ten years globally has involved a growing number of businesses and has been used as an important lever to promote business growth (Bianchi and Bivona, 2012). It's important for SMEs to be continuous in growth to maintain competitive advantage. Social media researchers have enumerated a number of uses of social media by SMEs which includes quests to attract new customers, cultivate relationships with customers, increase brand awareness and receiving feedback from customers which stimulates business growth (Ainin *et al.,* 2015). Therefore, the following hypothesis is put forth:
H4: The use of social media in in SMEs influence growth

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework
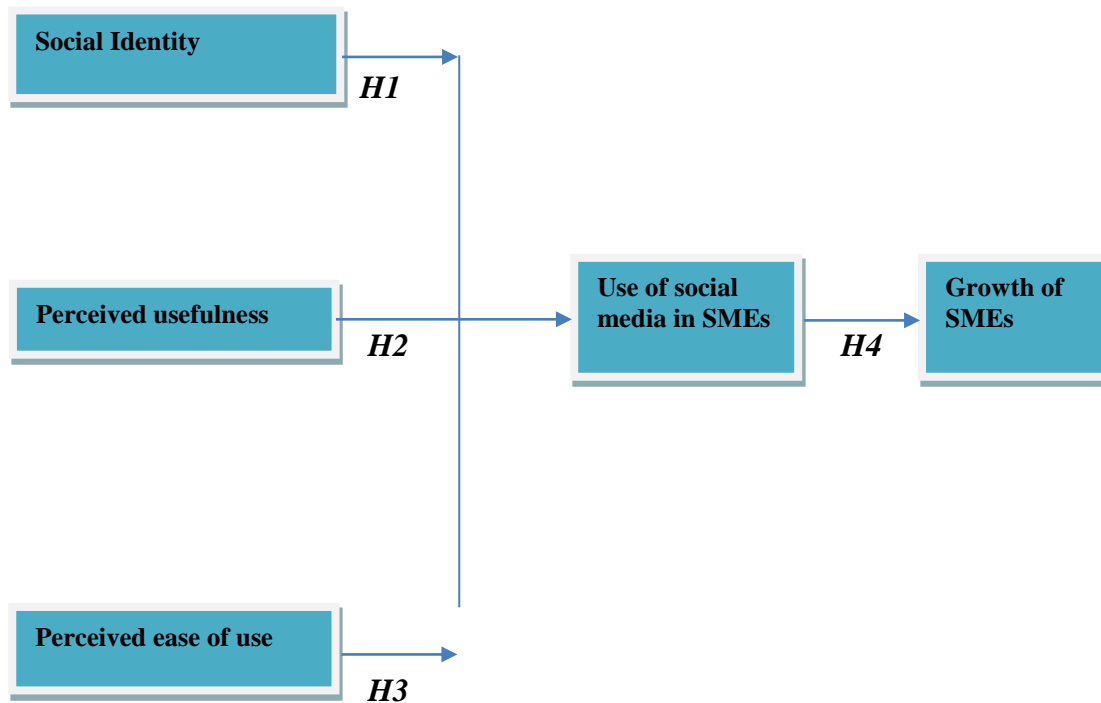
Methodology

This research employed quantitative research techniques. A total of 394 owner-managers of fashion SMEs from Nairobi and Kiambu counties were surveyed using a structured questionnaire. The study used simple random sampling to include units in the sample after obtaining the sampling frame from the Registrar of Micro and Small Enterprises in Kenya of the said counties. Important information obtained from the Registrar of Micro and Small Enterprises included telephone numbers, name of the business owners and the business location. This comprehensive list of SMEs was used to generate a sample using rules governing probability sampling whereby every element of the population has an equal chance of being selected to form a study sample. This approach gives an opportunity to every element to be included in the study therefore minimizing selection bias. Collected data was analyzed mainly through multivariate analysis using structural equations modelling. Data analysis involved data preparation, presentation, descriptive analysis, hypothesis testing and multivariate analysis as shown in the next sections.

General Findings; Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive statistics of the study is summarized in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics

| Descriptive Characteristics	Measures	Sample Composition	
		n	%
Gender			
	Male	151	38.3
	Female	243	61.7
Products selling in fashion industry			
	Clothes	207	52.5
	Cosmetics	76	19.3
	Shoes	72	18.3
	Hand bags	39	9.9
Social media platforms used for business			
	Facebook	303	76.9
	LinkedIn	5	1.3
	Instagram	64	16.2
	Twitter	12	3.0
	Google+	2	0.5
	Myspace	2	0.5
	Friend Feed	1	0.3
	You Tube	2	0.5
	Photo buck	3	0.8
Number of employees			
	1-5 Employees	340	86.3
	6-10 Employees	39	9.9
	11-15 Employees	5	1.3
	16-20 Employees	2	0.5
	Above 21 Employees	8	2.0
Age of the business			
	Between 1-3 Years	231	58.6
	Between 4-6 Years	111	28.2
	Between 7-9 Years	20	5.1
	Above 10 Years	32	8.1
Time Spent on social media			
	Less than an hour	9	6.0
	Between 1-2 hours	15	10.0
	Between 2-4 hours	18	12.0
	More than 4 hours	62	41.3
	Always on platform	46	30.7
How do you access social media			
	Phone	297	75.4
	iPad or Tablet	31	7.9
	Laptop	46	11.7
	Personal Computer	20	5.1

Note: *n* = 394

Results and Discussions; Multivariate Analysis

This study sought to find out the relationships between social identity, perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use of social media towards the use of social media and growth of SMEs. From the model employed, social identity examined the effects of cognitive, affective, and evaluative identification on social media usage. Lee et al., (2011) points out that these social identity components have significant effect on both intentions to use and actual usage of social media on promotion. On the other hand, perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use were used to examine the perceptions and attitudes of the SMEs owner-mangers towards the use of social media in their ventures which in turn also influences the intentions to use and actual usage.

Reliability and Validity

Reliability of the measurement items was assessed by inspecting the loadings. Confirmatory Factor Analysis was done and the results indicated loadings ranging from 0.52 to 0.84. Loadings should be at least 0.5 but for a good model it should be 0.7 or higher. In this case, constructs that had loadings below 0.60 were deleted. The resulting loadings were ranging between 0.65 to 0.83 with only one loading below 0.70 at 0.65. The CFA model is shown in the Figure 2 below.

Figure 2: The CFA Model
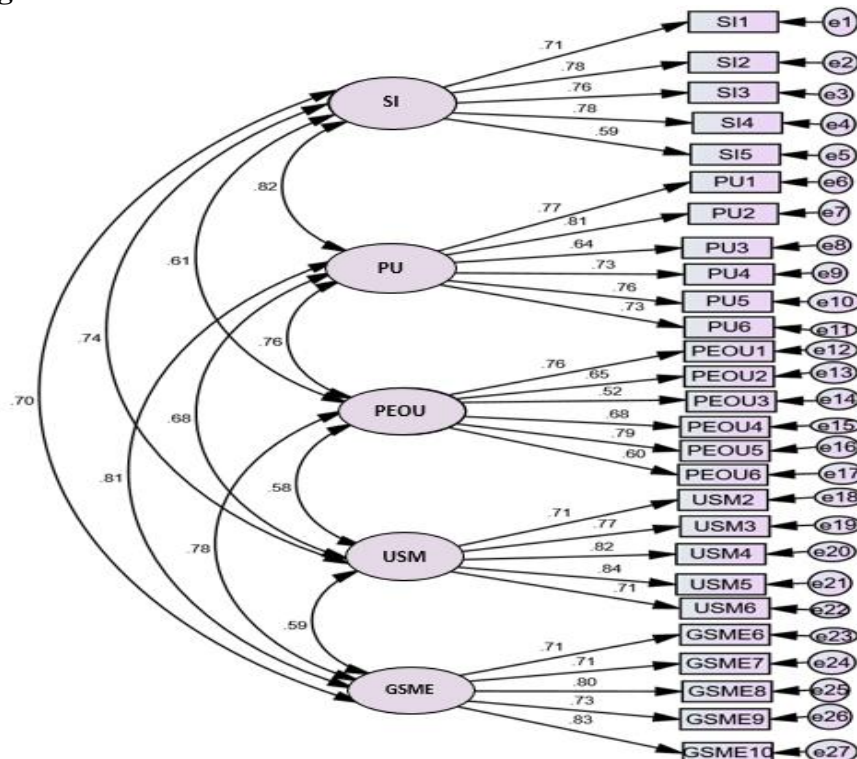
Analysis of the Structural Model

The study hypothesised the following factors; Social Identity, Perceived Usefulness, Perceived Ease of Use, Use of Social Media and Growth of SME. The results of the analysis using AMOS are shown in the figure below.

Figure 3: The Structural Model Interelating Social Identity, Perceived Usefulness, Perceived Ease of Use, Use of Social Media and Growth of SME
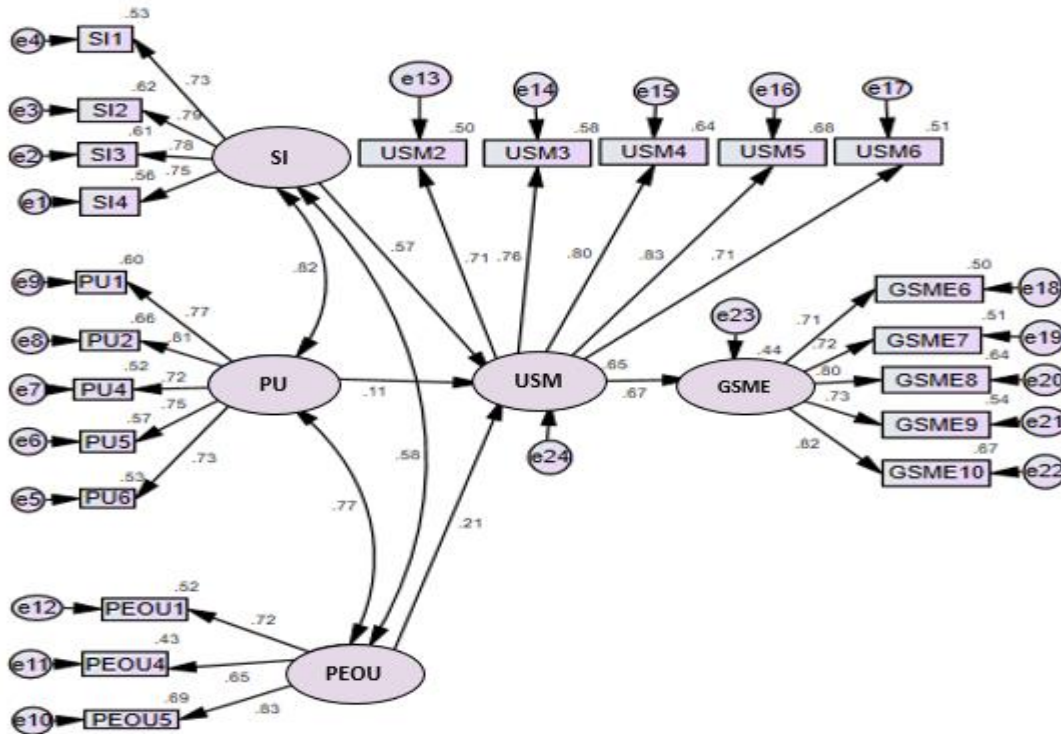
Chi-square = 625.836
Degrees of freedom = 202
Probability level = .000
CMIN/DF = 3.098
CFI = 0.915
RMSEA = 0.073
RMR = 0.051

Table 2: Structural Model Assessment Results

		Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	*p*-value	Standardized Estimate
Social Identity → Usage		.543	.096	5.667	.000	.566

			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	*p*-value	Standardized Estimate
PU	→	Usage	.116	.139	.834	.404	.105
PEOU	→	Usage	.179	.070	2.539	.011	.211
Usage	→	Growth	.658	.066	10.035	.000	.665

Table 3: Main Model Standardized Indirect Effects and Squared Multiple Correlations

	PEOU	PU	SI	USM	GSME	Squared Multiple Correlations Estimate
USM	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.646
GSME	.140	.070	.377	.000	.000	.442

Assessment of the Hypotheses

The model-fit indices for the structural model provided evidence of a good model fit as shown in the model above (*Chi-square = 625.836; Degrees of freedom = 202; Probability level = 0.000; CMIN/DF = 3.098; CFI = 0.915; RMSEA = 0.073; RMR = 0.051*).

The first hypothesis of the study was stated as;
H1: Social identity influence the use of social in SMEs
The SEM results revealed that there was a significant relationship between social identity and social media usage (β estimate = 0.543; *t*-value = 5.667 and *p*-value = 0.000). Based on these findings, the null hypothesis is true and therefore not rejected. The standardized results confirm that there is a positive relationship between social identity elements and the use of social media. The standardized coefficient is associated with the critical value, C.R. = 5.667 using significance level of $p < 0.05$, C.R. > 1.96 which indicates that the relationship is significant as summarized in Table 5.2. The standardized estimate for this relationship is shown to be 0.566. Hoe (2008) indicates that the standardized path coefficient should be at least 0.2 for it to be considered meaningful and significant for discussing the results. The results therefore confirm a strong positive relationship between social identity and social media use. In terms of standard deviations, this is a clear indication that when social identity goes up by a standard deviation (one standard deviation), social media use goes up by 0.566 standard deviation. The overall effect of social identity generally supports positive associations with participation behaviour, i.e., the intention to use and the actual usage of social media (Dholakia *et al*., 2004; Lee *et al*., 2011).

On the hand, the study was able to evaluate the indirect (mediation) effect of social identity on the growth of SMEs. As indicated in Table 5.3, the indirect coefficients of the mediated

relationship between social identity and SME growth is 0.377. In terms of standard deviations, it means that due to the indirect (mediated) effect of social identity on SME growth, when social identity goes up by a standard deviation (one standard deviation), SME growth goes up by 0.377 standard deviations. This confirms a positive relationship between social identity and growth of SMEs.

The second hypothesis of the study was stated as;
H2: *Perceived usefulness of social media influence the use of social media in SMEs*
Contrary to the first hypothesis, the SEM results revealed that there was no significant relationship in the second hypothesis (β estimate = 0.116; *t*-value = 0.834 and *p*-value = 0.404). Based on these results, the second hypothesis is thus rejected.
The standardized estimate of this path is indicated as 0.105 with $p > 0.05$ and C.R. = 0.834. With C.R. < 1.96, standardized coefficient estimate of less than 0.2 as discussed earlier and *p*-value greater than 0.05 is a clear indication that there's a negative relationship between perceived usefulness and social media use. The result therefore doesn't support the second hypothesis. Since perceived ease of use is the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would be free of effort, Davis (1989) argues that if a particular is perceived as easy to use it is more likely to be accepted by users. This, however, is rejected by the hypothesis. The study shows that users have different reasons for using social media apart from it being perceived as useful. Although most researchers show perceived usefulness to be directly related to ICT usage, there are some findings that show no significant effect such as Ndubisi, Jantan, and Richardson (2001) and also Igbaria *et al*. (1995).

The study indicates that the standardized indirect (mediated) effect of perceived usefulness on growth of SMEs is shown as 0.070. This means that, due to the indirect (mediated) effect of perceived usefulness on growth of SMEs, when perceived usefulness goes up by a standard deviation (one standard deviation), growth of SMEs goes up by 0.070 standard deviations. According to Bayesian Estimation, 0.070 falls below the lower bound at 95% confidence level clearly indicating that there's a negative relationship between perceived usefulness and growth of SMEs.

The third hypothesis of the study was stated as;
H3: *Perceived ease of use of social media influence the use of social media in SMEs*
The SEM results here confirmed that this relationship was significant (β estimate = 0.179; *t*-value = 2.539 and *p*-value = 0.011). The third hypothesis is true based on these results and therefore not rejected.

The standardized results show positive path coefficient of 0.211, critical value, C.R. = 2.539 and $p < 0.05$ indicating that there's a positive relationship between perceived ease of use and usage of social media in SMEs. This is an indication that when perceived ease of use goes up by a standard deviation (one standard deviation), use of social media goes up by 0.211 standard deviation. Davis (1989) states that perceived ease of use is the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would be free of effort and thus if social media is perceived easy to use it is more likely to be accepted by users. The study confirms that this is true.
The study was also able to evaluate the indirect (mediating) effect of perceived ease of use on the growth of SMEs. The indirect coefficients of the mediated relationship between perceived ease of use and growth of SMEs was indicated as 0.140. This means that due to the indirect (mediated)

effect of perceived ease of use on growth of SMEs, when perceived ease of use goes up by a standard deviation (one standard deviation), growth of SMEs goes up by 0.140 confirming the positive relationship of the third hypothesis (*H3*).

The fourth hypothesis was used as a mediator hypothesis since the use of social media was used as a fully mediating variable. The fourth hypothesis of the study was therefore stated as;
H4: *The use of social media in promotion influences growth of SMEs*
The SEM results confirmed that this, just like the first and the third hypothesis, showed that the relationship was statistically supported (β estimate = 0.658; *t*-value = 10.035 and *p*-value = 0.000). The fourth hypothesis is true based on the SEM results and therefore not rejected.
A standard coefficient path of 0.665 and $p < 0.001$ indicates a positive relationship between use of social media and growth of SMEs. When social media use goes up by a standard deviation (one standard deviation), growth of SMEs goes up by 0.665 standard deviations indicating a very strong positive relationship between social media use and growth of SMEs supporting the fourth hypothesis (*H4*). The study agrees that the use of social media has been found to improve business competitiveness, providing opportunities for SMEs to compete favorably and experience growth (Chapman *et al*., 2010). The development of social media in the last ten years globally has involved a growing number of businesses and has been used as an important lever to promote business growth (Bianchi and Bivona, 2012).

Covariances

The study further examined the covariances between the variables so as to explain whether the relationships between the variables are meaningful. The covariances are summarized in Table 3 below.

Table 4: Covariances

			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Estimate
PU	<-->	PEOU	.254	.027	9.280	***	.768
SI	<-->	PU	.239	.026	9.255	***	.817
SI	<-->	PEOU	.220	.028	7.826	***	.578

The results in Table 4 above indicate that there were significant relationships between the three independent variables. First, perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use had a statistically significant correlation with a C.R. value of 9.280 which is above the accepted limit of 1.96. Secondly, social identity versus perceived usefulness had a statistically significant correlation with a C.R. value of 9.255. Finally, social identity versus perceived ease of use was also statistically significant with an accepted C.R. value of 7.826.

Discussions

Based on the SEM results, the overall effect of social identity generally supports positive associations with participation behavior, i.e., the intention to use social media in this study (Dholakia *et al*., 2004; Lee *et al*., 2011). The results showed β estimate = 0.543; *t*-value = 5.667

and *p*-value = 0.000 confirming that *there is a positive relationship between social identity and the use of social in SMEs.* Therefore, in light of the affective, cognitive, and evaluative dimension of social identity, this study proposes that each dimension exerts a positive effect on both the intention to use and the actual usage. When members emotionally commit to a social group, they are more likely to perform in-group behaviors, such as patronage to online communities in the social media context. In addition, empirical evidence from a recent survey of young social media users suggests that users who are emotionally involved with an online group are more likely to actively use social media than those with less emotional involvement (Hadad, 2015).

However, in the TAM model, a further direct link between perceived usefulness and behavioral intention was incorporated by Davis *et al*. (1989) to suggest that perceived usefulness may impact on behavioral intention to use the technology-based system, irrespective of attitude towards this system, provided that use of the system is perceived to offer direct benefits to the user. As such, users can adopt and use a particular technology not because they perceive it's useful but because there are particular benefits the users are looking for. Therefore, although most researchers have found perceived usefulness to be directly related to usage, there are some findings that show no significant effect on usage such as Ndubisi, Jantan, and Richardson (2001). The finding of an insignificant relationship between PU and actual usage are further echoed by Igbaria *et al*., (1995).This study had hypothesized that *perceived usefulness of social media influence the use of social media in SMEs* but contrary to this hypothesis, the SEM results revealed that there was no significant relationship in the second hypothesis (β estimate = 0.116; *t*-value = 0.834 and *p*-value = 0.404) and therefore changing the direction of the hypothesis.

When a social media platform that is perceived as facilitating a transaction process and is easy to operate is likely to be accepted by the SME owner-managers. The study agrees with this because the SEM results indicated a positive relationship between perceived ease of use and social media usage. This study hypothesized that *perceived ease of use of social media influence the use of social media in SMEs* and the SEM results were found to be significant (β estimate = 0.179; *t*-value = 2.539 and *p*-value = 0.011). The results therefore indicate that perceived ease of use significantly contributes to the usage of social media. When SME owner-managers perceive that the use of social media in their businesses is free of effort, they'll go ahead and use them. On the other hand, social media use affects a firm's growth ability by increasing its scope and extending its core business through market penetration and development, and receiving feedback from customers. Based on the social media technology, a firm is able to quickly and effectively expand its geographical markets locally, regionally and globally. These relationships can increase the likelihood of sales and opportunities to introduce new products and services. The study hypothesized that *the use of social media influence growth of SMEs.* This, just like the first and the third hypothesis, showed that the relationship was statistically supported (β estimate = 0.658; *t*-value = 10.035 and *p*-value = 0.000). The SEM results therefore confirmed that there's a positive relationship between social media use and the growth of fashion SMEs.

Conclusions and Further Recommendations
This paper sheds light on social media use in SMEs' and the benefits associated with their usage. The study examined these relationships grounded on the Social Identity theory, Technology Acceptance Model and Theory of Planned Behavior. In general, the research found that social identity and perceived ease of use were factors that had influence on the usage of social media by fashion SMEs while perceived usefulness on the other hand had no significant effect.

Consequently, the usage of social media was shown to have influence on the growth of the fashion SMEs. These results are consistent with previous studies conducted in other contexts (Ainin *et al*., 2015). The results however showed that the motivation towards the usage of social media was centered on benefits derived from use and not the positive associations and participation behaviour as proposed by Lee *et al*., 2011. Most existing research on business use of social media is related to large organizations and does not specifically address SMEs (Stockdale *et al*., 2012). In addition, it tends to be focused on the technical and commercial use of the various applications rather than adopting a strategic focus or examining the value gained by the adoption and usage of such applications (Constantinides *et al*., 2008). This research study narrowed down and focused specifically on fashion SMEs and encouraged them to use social media and take a more strategic perspective. SMEs are under growing pressure to employ technology effectively in order to survive therefore it is increasingly important for them to utilize social media optimally.

Further, the use of ICT plays a significant role in today's business activities. It is suggested that adoption and use of appropriate technology can lead to greater business competency, improving business performance, enhancing competitive advantage and encouraging growth. The use of ICT and social media in particular has been widely examined in both marketing and information technology disciplines. A number of adoption models have been developed in literature but there are four models that have been used extensively; Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) and Diffusion of Innovation (DOI). Besides these models, there are other models which can be used to explain the adoption and use of ICT and specifically the use of social media but seems to be left out.

Social identity theory which is classified under social behavior theories focus on group behavior, from which, group dynamics are found to directly affect user behavior and their involvement in social activities. Companies including SMEs can apply the attributes from these theories to identify key social factors that stimulate users to participate in collective actions in their social media platforms. These factors in turn, can be used in developing strategies to foster the necessary environments for building and maintaining social communities. As TAM examines the perceptions (perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness) and the attitudes of technology users that affects the behavioral inclination of the users, social identity also examined the perceptions, attitudes and behaviors of the users of technology in categorizing them into groups. More profoundly, the study found out that Facebook was the most preferred platform by the owner managers to conduct their business activities. This was closely followed by Instagram. The study however didn't find out why these two platforms were most preferred and further research can be employed to find out why.

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