

THE BENEFITS OF USING SOCIAL MEDIA IN THE RETAIL SECTOR

IN THE NELSON MANDELA BAY

BY

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and

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DECLARATION

We, Curtley Johnson (213486687) and Dean van Zyl (213460629), hereby declare that the content of this treatise, entitled “The benefits of using social media in the retail sector in the Nelson Mandela Bay region of the Eastern Cape, South Africa”, is our own original work; and that it has not previously been submitted for assessment of any postgraduate qualification at another university or for another qualification, and that all sources used or quoted have been acknowledged and indicated as complete references.

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ABSTRACT

Given the importance of a business being able to market their products, engage with customers and employees, there is a lack of attention given to research of how social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Instagram and LinkedIn can benefit retailers. Regardless of the extensive use of social media, not much is known on the definite impact that these social media platforms and technologies have on business and retail sector performance. Furthermore, social media is a fairly new study and the impact of social media is also fairly new, therefore research focuses more on the advantages of social media rather than disadvantages. Thus, the primary objective of this study is to investigate the benefits of using social media in the retail sector in Nelson Mandela Bay region, of the Eastern Cape.

Based on the primary objective of the study, a positivistic research paradigm, in conjunction with a quantitative research method was deemed most suitable.

A full literature review was conducted on the benefits of using social media platforms for businesses such as retailers. Thereafter, an empirical investigation was undertaken to be able to establish the benefits of using social media in the retail sector. Furthermore, independent variables (*Information collection, Marketing, Employee engagement* and *Customer engagement*) were identified as possibly influencing the dependent variable (*Benefits received*). All four independent variables were selected and used to construct a hypothetical model and research hypothesis. The measuring instrument used for this study, a questionnaire, was constructed from secondary literature sources. A total of 130 questionnaires were distributed, with 101 usable questionnaires returned. The opinions of the respondents on the questionnaire were obtained from using a 5-point Likert scale method, varying from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5) to clearly express the respondent's sentiments on the statements made. A snowball and convenience sampling method were used to identify the respondents.

Furthermore, the usable questionnaires that were gathered from the respondents was examined through statistical analyses. Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was used to confirm the validity of the measuring instrument, while the calculation of Cronbach's

alpha coefficients was used to confirm the reliability of the measuring instrument. Thereafter, descriptive statistics and frequency, as part of the data analyses, were calculated to summarise and allow interpretation of the data. In addition, inferential statistics were calculated using Pearson's Product Moment Correlations to calculate and determine correlations among variables used in this study. Moreover, Multicollinearity testing was conducted to determine whether the independent variables were free from collinearity. Thereafter, the empirical investigation was concluded by a calculation of a Multiple regression analysis to test the significance of relationships hypothesised between the independent and dependent variables. Based on the results of the empirical investigations, two significant relationships were found among the independent variables (*Employee engagement* and *Customer engagement*) and the dependent variables (*Benefits received*). This study revealed that small retail businesses benefit from using social media platforms to engage with customers and employees.

Therefore, the empirical results have contributed on understanding the influence of social media platforms on retailers. The hypothetical model developed for this study assisted in understanding the benefits social media has in the retail sector. As a result, this study provides recommendations and suggestions for retailers how and which social media platforms can be used to benefit their business.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION, PROBLEM STATEMENT AND SCOPE OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Social media has become a huge part of people's everyday life by influencing how people "store, publish, search for and consume" data (Alejandro, 2010:3). With the aid of the technological advances, the need to own the latest devices increased. Many people have not realised the importance of social media yet, although the use of it is rapidly increasing (Kumpel, Karnowski & Keyling, 2015:1).

Social media is defined as applications created and intended for internet usage and built on ideological and technical foundation that allows for user generated exchange of content (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010:61). Social media is used by individuals of all ages and is accessed by using technological devices which are available all around the world. According to Duffet (2017:27), the purchase of mobile phones has amplified from 23 percent in 2013, to over 46 percent in 2014. The younger, internet-inclined generation of employee's are the future; however, they meet to their current social media expectations by using social media in the business (Singla & Durga, 2015:90). In addition, social media has led to many other unforeseen negative spinoffs (McGrath, 2012:4), which begs the question: Do the benefits of using social media outweigh the negative influence it has on people's behaviour?

Businesses too tend to rely on social media as a tool to market their brand and produce a positive social corporate image that will attract and hopefully retain customers (Bartoletti, 2013:7). According to Hensel (2008:50) small businesses can become more competitive and level out the playing field in the sense that small businesses can seem bigger than they actually are. Moreover, social media platforms such as Twitter and Facebook have become easy to access. In accordance, Kumpel *et al.* (2015:1) state that social media has become the platform used for news, which means information can be posted by any individual at their disposal. People are online all the time, even during work hours. Numerous businesses, particularly retailers, have understood the potential preferences and benefits that social media platforms can

have for a business. Along these lines, these businesses have embraced social media and online cooperation strategies to advertise and promote products and services. Social media can be utilised by businesses, including focused South African retailers, to associate with clients, to advertise products and services and provide business information (Zarella, 2010:1). Furthermore, in many cases, social networking is considered to have a positive impact on the employee's performance by helping employees meet important business contacts and serve as an incentive for employees to stay motivated. However, the use of social media at work also means that employees are not as productive because time is spent on social media instead of doing work. It is for this reason that businesses implement policies around the use of social media at work to limit staff usage, and on the other hand also embrace the positive aspects of social media use at work (Seppä, 2008:1).

The objective of this study is to investigate the benefits of using social media in the retail sector. The objective is obtained by analysing the benefits and drawbacks of social media usage for small retail businesses in the Nelson Mandela Bay region of the Eastern Cape, South Africa.

1.2 THE LITERATURE OVERVIEW ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Kaplan and Haenlein (2010:62) refer to social media as "Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of User Generated Content". Similarly, Taprial and Kanwar (2012:8) describe social media to be a means of social interaction through media sources and platforms, accessed by making use of web-based technologies. In this study, social media is considered as social platforms which are accessed using internet servers, which employees use for personal and work-related communication in the retail sector.

In the following section, the five most popular social media platforms used in businesses and in the retail sector such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest and LinkedIn will be briefly discussed (McLeod, 2017).

1.2.1 Facebook

Facebook is known to be one of the most popular social media platforms. “There are approximately 1.32 billion monthly active users of Facebook alone” (Carlson, 2016:15). Facebook is used to maintain awareness of colleagues, information gathering and to build working relationships (Skeels & Grudin, 2009:99). Adzovie, Nyieku and Keku (2017:112) state that Facebook can be used to build good relationships through communication between employees, with potential employees and the media like journalists (McCorkindale, 2010:11).

Moreover, McCorkindale (2010:11) states that Facebook posts can create an opportunity for businesses to communicate and engage with customers about product related problems. Islwyn (2018) mention that Facebook is a good platform to improve communication in the business as it allows employees to communicate within a well-known interface using Facebook groups and the Messenger application. According to Mariscal (2017), Facebook Messenger can assist with providing a service (this allows businesses to send private emails or messages directly to clients and customers with the required information), raising awareness (acquiring new customers for a product) and enabling transactions (e.g. directly sell exclusive products or services). On the other hand, Long (2017) states that the use of Facebook groups is a good way to attract an engaged community of individuals who are interested in your business.

1.2.2 Twitter

Twitter is also known as micro-blogging is a social media platform that allows people to post messages limited to 140 characters in text (Armstrong & Gao, 2010:222). Business communication via Twitter involves knowledge sharing about the profession of employees, the business itself and employee behaviour. This assists employees in creating a professional identity. According to Van Zoonen, Verhoeven and Vliegenthart (2016:331-332), the use of Twitter provides employees with a platform to represent their business online and contribute to brand communication. Furthermore, Twitter allows employees the opportunity to share vacancy information, share their opinions and/or comment on work-related issues. In addition, Dreher (2014:345) state that

Twitter strengthens employees' ability to reach out and form relationships with customers, business partners and other stakeholders (e.g. suppliers).

1.2.3 Pinterest

Pinterest is a social media platform which aims at connecting people in the world through common interests and consists of images and videos representing the latest interests of society – posts are known as “pinning” and people pin onto their own accounts or onto others' pinboards (Gilbert, Bakhshi, Chang & Terveen, 2013:2427; Georgieva, 2013:5). Moreover, this social network allows people to share and comment on this visual material serving as a virtual scrapbook where one can attach images from other peoples' web pages which seems interesting or helps one in gaining inspiration (BBC Active, 2010), which according to Casna (2017) makes this a unique social network.

Furthermore, according to Georgieva (2013:7), Pinterest users are intense buyers, and spend more money, more regularly than any of users on other social media sites. Similarly, Perez (2018) confirms this by stating that Pinterest users have proved to spend more money per purchase than any other social network in the world. More specifically, Gilbert, *et al.* (2013:2427) states that Pinterest users tend to browse through e-commerce sites which leads to these users spending more money on this site than users coming from other social networks such as Facebook and Twitter. In terms of the number of users, Cheng, Lo and Leskovec (2017:1) claim that Pinterest is a content sharing platform used by more than 150 million active monthly users. Moreover, Pinterest has grown its' number of users by 4000%, to over 10 million users in 2011. In context, according to Georgieva (2013:7) this social media site receives an estimated 85.5 million new monthly visitors. However more recently, Casna (2017) claims that Pinterest boasts 150 million monthly users. She also adds that at one point, Pinterest was driving more referral traffic than Google Plus, Youtube and LinkedIn combined.

1.2.4 Instagram

Instagram is a social network which provides individuals with the ease of capturing moments and instantaneously sharing it with friends and relatives through pictures and videos (Hu, Manikonda, & Kambhampati, 2014). Similarly, this social network is defined by Nummila (2015:1) as a mobile application which allows users to take photos and “post” them from their mobile devices. The purpose of this social media is to serve as a social link between friends, family, colleagues, and users with commonalities (Herman, 2014:1).

Furthermore, Collier (2018) states that the main use for creating an Instagram account, is for the retailer to be found by either other retailers or customers, by promoting posts using the Instagram Business Tools in the Advertiser Help Section or by taking a Blueprint e-learning course (Instagram, 2016).

1.2.5 LinkedIn

According to Kodicherla, Karunanidhi and Hinge (2011:2), one of the key functionalities of LinkedIn is to focus on the development of businesses. Moreover, Mind Tools (2017) adds that LinkedIn provides business professionals with the ability to network with individuals and businesses in any industry by allowing members to share information with other LinkedIn members and businesses that do similar work. Lacho (2010:127) concurs by stating that LinkedIn serves as a new and more convenient way of networking that has impacted the way professionals interact with one another. On average each connection on LinkedIn is connected to about 110 business professionals. This means that the more quality connections that a business makes, the more opportunities it will be exposed to that will contribute in growing the business (LinkedIn, 2017). It is important for businesses to remember that members of LinkedIn will only enjoy the benefits of the site if they make regular use of the social networking site and take the necessary time to keep their networks and profiles up-to-date (Thew, 2008:89).

LinkedIn may be used to help people connect in a professional setting by exchanging knowledge, ideas and opportunities (Skeels & Grudin, 2009:97; Witzig, Spencer &

Galvin, 2012:113). LinkedIn provides businesses with the opportunity to develop a strong presence in the marketplace. Advertising products and services through LinkedIn's photo and video features can create a visual experience for prospective customers (Kodicherla, *et al.*, 2011:2; Lacho, 2010:131). LinkedIn can furthermore be used to recruit staff. According to Witzig *et al.*, (2012:119) business owners that cannot afford to establish an adequate human resources department can use LinkedIn as a more cost-effective method to recruit prospective employees.

In the section to follow, the problem statement will be presented, followed by the research objectives, research questions and methodological objectives.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

According to Aral, Dellarocas and Godes (2013:6) social media has transformed the relationship among businesses, employees, and consumers. However, operating in the business environment has become increasingly difficult and achieving set goals and objectives has become more of a challenge (Jue, Marr & Kassotakis, 2009:2). Thus, it is important to understand the impact social media usage has on businesses, employees and consumers to succeed in the retail sector. Furthermore, social media has introduced an array of new opportunities and challenges ranging from marketing and operations to finance and human resource management (Aral, *et al.* 2013:3). In general businesses regularly face challenges through the implementation and use of social media. (Kuikka & Äkkinen, 2011:2). Kaplan and Haenlein (2010:64-65) mention that social media is continuously changing; therefore, businesses need to implement a strategy that can be applied to any form of social media.

Social media platforms are excellent for fostering relationships with customers (De Vries, Gensler & Leeflang, 2012:83). Nearly 70 percent of executives say their businesses will be perceived as "out of touch" if they do not engage in social media, and over half believe their competition is successfully reaching customers through social media (Baird & Parasnis, 2011:32). Regardless of the extensive use of social media, not much is known on the definite impact that these platforms and technologies have on business and retail sector performance (Denyer, Parry & Flowers, 2011:376).

In light of the above, it is evident that social media boasts numerous advantages for retailers and customers. According to Amedie (2015:17) social media is a fairly new study and the impact of social media is also fairly new, therefore research focuses more on the advantages of social media rather than disadvantages. Regardless of the popularity for individual use and application in the business, not much is known about the impact of social media on completing work and tasks (Tsay, Dabbish, & Herbsleb, 2012:223). Ferreira and Du Plessis (2009:1) suggest that dangers associated with social media such as loss of privacy and lower employee efficiency should be looked at. However, according to Ferreira and Du Plessis (2009:1) the impact of social media on worker productivity has not been given much academic attention. Most of the research conducted has been on the impact of social media use on the psychological and social aspects while less is known about the benefits of social media usage in the businesses with specific reference to small retailer businesses. (Charoensukmongkol, 2014:340). Therefore, further research needs to be done with regards to how using social media can benefit retailers.

1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND QUESTIONS

The primary objective of this study is to investigate the benefits of using social media in the retail sector in the Nelson Mandela Bay region. In order to achieve the primary objective of this study, the following secondary objectives have been formulated:

- SO¹ To establish the devices and frequency used to access popular social media platforms;
- SO² To investigate the frequency of social media usage for personal and work-related issues;
- SO³ To determine what social media is used for by retailers;
- SO⁴ To explore the benefits of utilising social media for retailers;
- SO⁵ To determine whether social media usage is beneficial for retailers;
- SO⁶ To determine the drawbacks associated with social media use by retailers, and

SO⁷ To establish what should be included in the social media policy for effective monitoring and governance.

The following methodological objectives will be investigated:

MO1: To conduct a literature review on the impact and importance of social media and types of platforms and contextualise it to the retail sector;

MO2: To determine the appropriate research methodology to be used in conducting this study;

MO3: To develop an appropriate measuring instrument to empirically test the influence of the independent variables on the dependent variables; and

MO4: To collect primary data from pre-determined sample and statistically analyse the data.

Considering the problem statement and primary objective of this study the following research questions are posed to realise the benefits of using social media platforms in the retail sector, as well as the benefits and drawbacks of social media usage in the business with reference to the retail sector:

- What are the devices and frequency used to access popular social media platforms in the retail sector?
- What is the frequency of social media usage for personal and work-related issues?
- What is social media used for by retailers?
- What are the benefits of utilising social media for retailers?
- Is social media usage beneficial for retailers?
- What are the drawbacks associated with social media use by retailers?
- What should be included in the social media policy for effective monitoring and governance?

1.5 PROPOSED THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND HYPOTHESES

The primary objectives of this study are to investigate the benefits of using social media in the retail sector in the Nelson Mandela Bay region of the Eastern Cape. The following theoretical framework is proposed using the key factors identified through the secondary research objectives and literature.

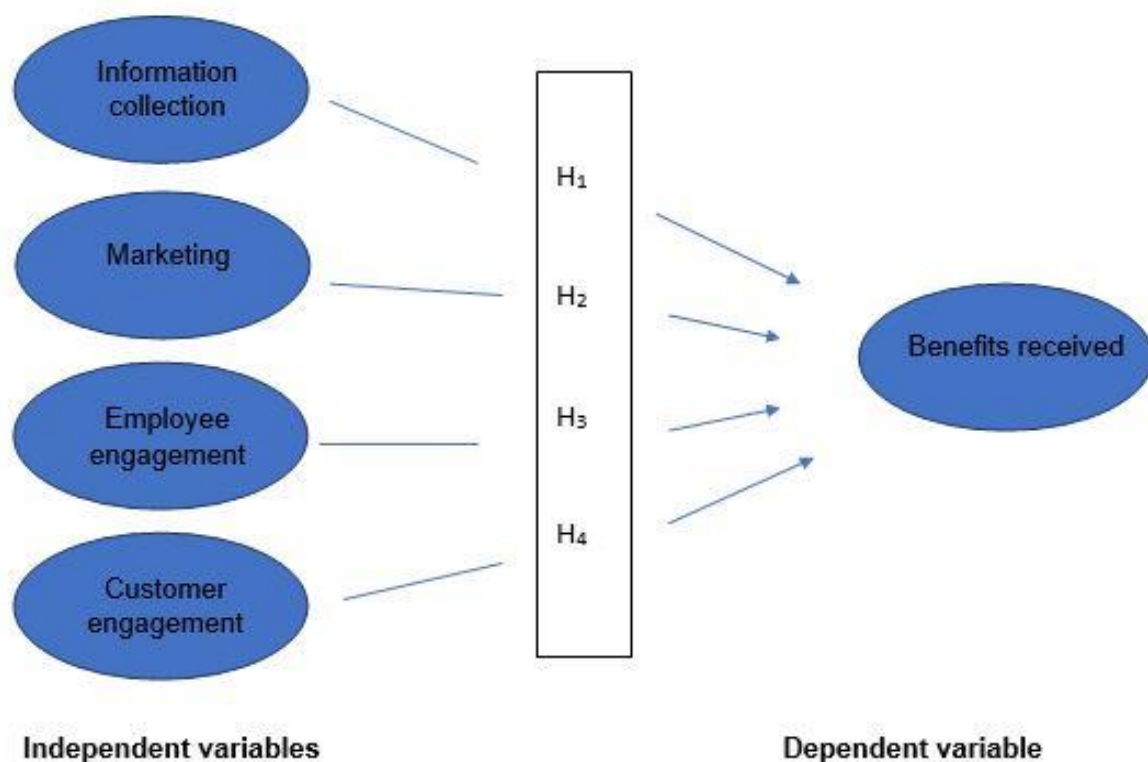
Previous research has shown that businesses using social media would create an opportunity for themselves if they improved their customer service relationships with customers, because majority of consumers and clients are active on social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter (Ontario, 2017). Therefore, businesses can manage relationships with consumers and clients instantly, rather than having to wait for the customer to revisit the store. Mattern (2017) confirms that there is an opportunity for businesses to brand themselves virtually as well as share ideas with others by being involved on a business social page. Businesses are also able to create awareness regarding their brand and products which may previously not have been known by individuals.

Furthermore, social media can be used in the business to improve communications among staff members. According to Skeels and Grudin (2009:101) instead of employees communicating face-to-face they can communicate via social media about work related problems regardless of where they are situated. Cao, Vogel, Guo, Liu and Gu (2012:3938) confirmed that social media can enhance work performance because it serves as a communication channel where knowledge can be effectively transferred among employees. Moreover, Charoensukmongkol (2014:343) mentions that the use of social media at work can have a positive impact on job performance. The active use of social media platforms these days has created some concerns for employers (Munene & Nyaribo, 2013:142), as there is a fine line between using social media for work or personal purposes. Employees can use social media during work-hours for personal use resulting in reduced productivity in the business (Munene & Nyaribo, 2013:141). It is for this reason that there is the perception that it has a negative impact on the business (Leftheriotis & Giannakos, 2014:134)

According to Aral, Dellarocas and Godes (2013:6) social media has transformed the relationship among businesses, employees, and consumers. However, operating in the business environment has become increasingly difficult and achieving set goals and objectives has become more of a challenge (Jue, Marr & Kassotakis, 2009:2). Thus, it is important to understand the impact social media usage has on businesses, employees and consumers to succeed in the retail sector. Regardless of the extensive use of social media, not much is known on the definite impact that these platforms and technologies have on business and retail sector performance (Denyer, Parry & Flowers, 2011:376).

Based on the literature the following proposed framework was developed. The proposed framework is illustrated in Figure 1.1.

Figure 1.1: SOCIAL MEDIA USES



(Source: Researcher's own construction).

The proposed theoretical framework identifies the following factors as the independent social media usage variables for this study, namely *Information collection*, *Marketing*,

Employee engagement and Customer engagement, while the *Benefits received* forms the dependent variable in this study.

1.5.1 Research hypotheses

Given the problem statement along with the primary and secondary objectives of this study, four hypotheses relating to *Information collection, Marketing, Employee engagement, Customer engagement* (independent variables) and *Benefits received* (dependent variable) have been formulated. Based on the literature review, the hypotheses were constructed to determine whether social media usage (independent variables) results in benefits (dependent variable) as indicated in Figure 1.1:

- H₁: Using social media for information collection results in benefits for retailers.
- H₂: Using social media for marketing results in benefits for retailers.
- H₃: Using social media for employee engagement results in benefits for retailers.
- H₄: Using social media for customer engagement results in benefits for retailers.

The above hypotheses will be investigated with the aim to provide an indication as to whether a relationship exists or not between the dependent variable (*Benefits received*) and the independent variables (*Information collection, Marketing, Employee engagement, and Customer engagement*). A comprehensive analysis of the results will serve as a basis to provide recommendations to small retail businesses as to how they can utilise social media to their benefit.

1.6 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The sections to follow remark upon the various research methods to be used in the research to obtain secondary research as well as primary research and the methodological steps.

1.6.1 Secondary research

Secondary research is defined as data that has been gathered for purposes other than the problem at hand which is used to then formulate an appropriate research design (Boslaugh, 2007:2). The sources used to link social media to the work environment are therefore secondary findings that will be statistically analysed. The study contains a literature review that will assist in determining what employed individuals used social media for in the retail sector and the effect it has on their business environment.

National and international databases are to be utilised to gather secondary information to aid the purpose of the study. The research for the literature review was attained from databases such as Emeraldinsight, EBSCOhost, SAGE, research journals and articles, as well as Google Scholar and related books with topics surrounding social media and the retail sector.

1.6.2 Primary research

The primary research will be conducted through the following three components, namely: research methodology and design; sampling and data collection, and lastly; the design of the measuring instrument was distinguished.

1.6.2.1 Research methods

There are two main research methods, namely quantitative and qualitative research. According to Patton and Cochran (2002:2) qualitative research makes use of words rather than statistics, as data analysis. Furthermore, Malterud (2001:483) state that qualitative research strategies include the accumulation, organisation, and understanding of documented material from talk and observation. Therefore, qualitative research is concerned with understanding individuals' encounters in a humanistic, interpretive approach (Jackson, Drummond & Camara, 2007:21). However, quantitative research uses numerical data, as data analysis (Watson, 2015:44). Moreover, Struwig and Stead (2013:6) mention that quantitative research must be expressed in numbers (e.g. it must be quantified).

In light of the above, the research method utilised by the researchers will be a quantitative research method. The researchers used a structured questionnaire and a survey. A 5-point Likert scale method will be utilised, varying from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5) to clearly express the respondent's sentiments on the statements made. Therefore, for this research specifically, data will be collected from people who are employed in the retail sector, in particular small retailers.

1.6.2.2 Population and sampling

According to Hassan (2013), a population is defined as a group of individuals or objects for the main aim of a scientific study. Sampling, on the other hand, is defined by Latham (2007:1) as the known group representing the number of units of a population. The respondents to participate in this study are small retail business employees, including business managers and owners.

1.6.2.3 Data Collection

The data of this study was collected by the researchers, from respondents operating in the Nelson Mandela Bay region of the Eastern Cape. The study consisted of a sample-size of 101 employed individuals employed in the retail sector, particularly store-retailers. The data for the first respondent was obtained by means of a questionnaire and subsequently the additional respondents were acquired by means of snowball sampling, as respondents were asked to recommend future respondents. In total, 130 questionnaires were distributed and a total of 101 questionnaires were returned and analysed accordingly, as per Chapter 3.

1.6.2.4 Design of the measuring instrument

Small retail business individuals in Nelson Mandela Bay in the Eastern Cape were handed a structured questionnaire to complete, containing information relating to social media platform usage, benefits, drawbacks and the structured questionnaire contained also a biographical information section. Furthermore, information pertaining to the devices used to access social media platforms, the frequency of the use of social media, along with policy and governance concerned with the management of social

media usage within the retail sector, was collected via the measuring instrument and will be presented in further chapters. The opinions of the respondents on the questionnaire are obtained from using a 5-point Likert scale method, varying from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5) to clearly express the respondent's sentiments on the statements made.

1.6.2.5 Data Analysis

The data collected from the questionnaire will be analysed and interpreted using descriptive statistics (frequency, mean average and standard deviation) as the survey will deal with the numerical representation of the data. According to Holcomb (2017:1) descriptive statistics is a tool used to organise and summarise data. Furthermore, to confirm the validity of the measuring instrument used in the study, an exploratory factor analysis will be conducted. Furthermore, to test for internal item consistency a Cronbach's alpha coefficients will be conducted to test the reliability of the measuring instrument. Moreover, Pearson's Product Moment Correlations will be calculated to determine correlations among variables used in this study. Furthermore, Multicollinearity will be calculated to determine if the variables are free from collinearity. Hereafter, a multiple regression analyses will be conducted to determine the relationships between the four independent variables (*Information collection, Marketing, Employee engagement and Customer engagement*) and the dependent variable (*Benefits of social media*).

1.7 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study identified the benefits of using social media in the retail sector. This study focused on retail employees, owners and managers associated with small retail businesses in the Nelson Mandela Bay region in the Eastern Cape. Furthermore, 130 questionnaires were handed out to various small retailers with 101 questionnaires being returned and deemed usable. This study will investigate four independent variables: namely, *Information collection, Marketing, Employee engagement and Customer engagement*.

Furthermore, this study intends to focus primarily on the various social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Instagram and LinkedIn) used in businesses specific to retailers, as well as the influence it has on the benefits of small retail business employees, managers and owners.

1.8 THE STRUCTURE OF THE RESEARCH

The structure of the research is as follows:

- Chapter one provides an introduction and background to the study. In addition, reference was made to the problem statement, the research objectives, including primary, secondary and methodological research objectives. The chapter will conclude with the research questions and the scope of study.
- Chapter two will provide a literature review based on the influence of social media on the business with specific reference to small retail businesses. The chapter will commence with a discussion on the definition and uses of social media in the business. Furthermore, a discussion on the different social media platforms used in the business with reference to retailers will take place. Thereafter, the aforementioned will be contextualised to the retail sector, and reference will be made to the different types of social media platforms used such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest and LinkedIn. Chapter two will then further commence with a discussion on the benefits and drawbacks of social media usage in the business with specific reference to small retailers, along with the social media policy and governance.
- Chapter three will focus on the research design and methodology to be used in this study and the rationale behind the selected methodology, by elaborating on the sample and sampling techniques, the measuring instrument to be used and the primary data collection method that will be utilised. The chapter will conclude with the statistical techniques used.

- Chapter four will focus on the empirical results of the study. Furthermore, the research findings and outcomes relating to the reliability and validity assessment will be presented.
- Chapter five will conclude the study by providing a brief overview of the proceeding chapters, together with a summary of the study. Based on the findings of the literature review and the empirical investigations conclusions will be drawn. Furthermore, the contributions and drawbacks of the study will be explained, and recommendations for further research will be proposed.

CHAPTER TWO

INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON THE RETAIL SECTOR

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In chapter one, the primary objective was to investigate the benefits of using social media in the retailer sector in the Nelson Mandela Bay region. In order to achieve the primary objective of this study, the secondary objectives formulated are to establish the devices and frequency used to access popular social media platforms; to investigate the frequency of social media usage for personal and work-related issues; to determine what social media is used for by retailers; to determine whether social media usage is beneficial for retailers; to determine the drawbacks associated with social media use by retailers, and to establish what should be included in the social media policy for effective monitoring and governance.

In light of the above, in this chapter, the literature review will give a theoretical base for the research by highlighting the relevance of social media to the business– with specific reference to the retail sector – defining social media platforms, as well as analysing benefits and drawbacks of social media affecting businesses such as retailers, in order to determine the nature of the research.

2.2 DISTINGUISHING SECTORS OF THE RETAIL SECTOR

As mentioned before, the study focuses on gathering data from employees employed in the retail sector. Retailing is the process of getting a product or service to the end-user (Amadeo, 2018). According to Kotler and Keller (2016:550) consumers can shop for goods and services through three different types of retailers, namely: store retailers; non-store retailers; and corporate retailers.

Table 2.1: Types of retailers

Types of retailers		
Store retailers	Non-store retailers	Corporate retailers
Speciality store	Direct marketing	Corporate chain store
Department store	Direct selling	Voluntary chain
Supermarket	Automatic vending	Retailer cooperative
Drug store	Buying service	Consumer cooperative
Discount store		Franchise organisation
Extreme value or hard-discount store		Merchandising conglomerate
Off-price retailer		
Superstore		
E-commerce store		

Source adapted from: Kotler & Keller (2016:552-553).

The aforementioned types of retailers will be discussed in more detail in the following section, which distinguishes between the different types of retailers to better define the selected sector.

2.2.1 Store retailers

According to Bhasin (2018) and Kotler and Keller (2016:552), there are 10 types of retail stores consumers have access to in the market. A speciality store has a narrow product line. A department store can normally be found in malls and offers several product lines. Furthermore, Mishra (2014) mentions that department stores carry a wide range of products that are placed by category into different sections of the physical retail space. A supermarket is normally large and presents an array of products available to consumers (Kotler & Keller, 2016:552; Bhasin, 2018). Farfan (2018) states that supermarkets sell a wide range of merchandise ranging from home products, food and beverages to clothing and consumer electronics. A convenience store is usually located in a residential area normally made up of small stores that offer basic products and services (Kotler & Keller, 2016:552).

Furthermore, Convenience stores sell a limited range of products at a premium “convenience” price (Farfan, 2018). A drug store specialises in selling medicines, health and beauty products such as pharmacies. A discount store offers products at low prices, low margins with high volume of sales (Bhasin, 2018). Similarly, Farfan (2018) notes that discount stores sell merchandise at lower than wholesale prices

which create a saving for customers. An extreme value or hard-discount store is “a more restricted merchandise mix than discount stores but at even lower prices” (Kotler & Keller, 2016:552). An off-price retailer sells products that have minor defects such as overruns or irregular merchandise and is sold at less than retail price (Kotler & Keller, 2016:552). Off-price retailers charge less than department stores for similar products (Mishra, 2014). A superstore is normally a huge retail store that offers every product one can think of, from household items to food items (Bhasin, 2018). Mishra (2014) mentions that superstores carry a full line of food products as well as non-food items. Lastly, an E-commerce store is a retail store that offers consumers products and service online (Bhasin, 2018; Kotler & Keller, 2016:552). Therefore, purchases made online by a customer will be shipped directly to the customer and sell for a lower than retail-price (Farfan, 2018).

2.2.2 Non-store retailers

According to Kotler and Keller (2016:552) non-store retailers are made up of four major categories. The first type of non-store retailer is direct marketing which includes telemarketing, television direct-response marketing and online shopping. Furthermore, direct marketing is used by a retailer to advertise a product or service directly to the end-user (Farfan, 2018). Another type of non-store retailer is direct selling which is also known as multilevel selling and includes all businesses that sell door-to-door or at-home sales parties (Kotler & Keller, 2016:552). Ashish (2013) defines direct selling as the “personal contact between a sales person and a consumer away from a retail store.” Bhasin (2018) further mentions that this type of retailing requires manual involvement and requires good selling techniques and skills. Also, a type of non-store retailer is vending machines that offer a range of products such as selling soft drinks (Kotler & Keller, 2016:552). Bhasin (2018) further mentions that vending machines are being used mainly in the fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) segment. Lastly, according to Kotler and Keller (2016:552) A non-store retailer can also be a retailer with no physical store serving a specific customer (i.e. online shopping).

2.2.3 Corporate retailers

Corporate retailers refer to stores that are part of a corporate retailing organisation. According to Kotler and Keller (2016:553) there are six major types of corporate retailers. Firstly, a corporate chain store that focuses on selling similar lines of products and usually consists of two or more outlets. Corporate chains are beneficial as they allow among others for mass-buying supervision, inventory control, quick turnover rates and store displays (Ramjee, 2017). Another corporate retailer is voluntary chains which are groups of independent retailers that engage in bulk buying. Also, another type of corporate retailer is a retailer cooperative which consists of independent retailers that engage in joint promotion efforts who receive discounts from manufacturers who then pass down to the customers (Kotler & Keller, 2016:553; Ramjee, 2017). A corporate retailer can also be a consumer cooperative which is a retail firm owned by customers.

Furthermore, an additional type of corporate retailer is a franchise organisation which is a store whereby a contractual agreement is made between the franchisor and the franchisee (Kotler & Keller, 2016:553). A franchisor can gain capital and labour supplies from the franchisee along with benefiting through quick expansion (Ramjee, 2017). Lastly, a corporate retailer can also be a merchandising conglomerate which usually takes form under single ownership and combines varied retailing lines (Kotler & Keller, 2016:553).

In light of the aforementioned types of retailers, the retail type selected for the purpose of this study will be store-retailers. Furthermore, the various social media platforms serve different purposes in the business and retail sector, therefore the sections to follow were presented in order to understand the role of social media in the business, as well as how it contributes and relates to the retail sector.

2.3 THE ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN THE BUSINESS

Kaplan and Haenlein (2010:62) refer to social media as “Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of User Generated Content”. Similarly, Taprial and Kanwar

(2012:8) describe social media to be a means of social interaction through media sources and platforms, accessed by making use of web-based technologies.

In this study, social media is considered as social platforms which are accessed using internet servers, which employees use for personal and work-related communication.

2.3.1 The benefits and importance of social media in businesses such as retailers

The use of social media is no longer in question, rather the question to be asking is; how should social media be used in a business such as retailers? Ontario (2017) identifies the following ways businesses can use social media:

- Affordably extend the marketing reach;
- Increase brand awareness;
- Drive traffic to the website;
- Promote products/services; and
- Test market ideas.

Furthermore, social media can be used in the business to improve communications among staff members. According to Skeels and Grudin (2009:101) instead of employees communicating face-to-face they can communicate via social media about work related problems regardless of where they are situated. Cao, *et al.*, (2012:3938) confirmed that social media can enhance work performance because it serves as a communication channel where knowledge can be effectively transferred among employees. Moreover, Charoensukmongkol (2014:343) mentions that the use of social media at work can have a positive impact on job performance.

In addition, Ontario (2017) mentions that businesses would create an opportunity for themselves if they improved their customer service relationships with customers, because most consumers and clients are active on social media platforms (such as Facebook and Twitter). Therefore, businesses can manage relationships with consumers and clients instantly, rather than having to wait for the customer to revisit the store. Mattern (2017) confirms that there is an opportunity for businesses to brand themselves virtually as well as share ideas with others by being involved on a business

social page. Businesses are also able to create awareness regarding their brand and products which may previously not have been known by individuals.

Miller-Meller (2015) is on the opinion that social media is important to the business for the following reasons:

- To engage and build relationships;
- To communicate effectively beyond email and phone;
- To provide businesses with trends and analysis;
- To foster self-development, learning and discovery; and
- To create organisational culture.

Social media has gained popularity because it not only allows users to maintain personal relationships, but also gives individuals an opportunity to make new social connections (Raacke & Bonds-Raacke, 2008:169). Moreover, the use of social media by employees has dramatically increased, whether it reduces or enhances productivity in the business (Munene & Nyaribo, 2013:141). Amongst many, according to Charoensukmongkol, (2014:340), some of the more popular social media sites which people use in the business are Facebook, Twitter as well as Pinterest, Instagram and LinkedIn will be covered in sections to follow.

Social media allows for the networking of users online by means of social networking sites which are applications that enable users to connect and interact with each other by creating personal information profiles (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010:64). Social networking sites are one of the most common technologies of social media (Safko & Brake, 2009:3). Social networking began as a way for individuals to keep contact with each other online rather than using the telephone or in person which has now become very popular, especially among young internet users (Lacho, 2010:128). Many users make use of social media sites largely for maintaining contact with their friends and acquaintances and in doing so, presenting a profile forms the basis of interaction on social media sites (Papacharissi, 2009:20). Individuals can decorate their personal profiles to include photos, videos, audio files or blogs, and they can share this information virtually (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010:63).

Social media was initially intended for connecting with friends and family, however social media sites are now considered as an important professional tool (Broughton, Foley, Leidermaier & Cox, 2013:5). There are numerous other ways in which businesses have become involved with social media (Waters, Burnett, Lamm & Lucas, 2009:102. Lacho (2010:129) highlights the following few reasons as to why businesses network online:

- To find business opportunities and potential partners;
- To post job listings in order to recruit the best talent;
- To manage the information that is publicly available about the business as a brand;
- To gain insights from discussions with likeminded professionals in private group settings;
- To discover potential customers, service providers and experts who come highly recommended for the intended purpose relative to the business.

Social media can serve a purpose both externally and internally for the business. Externally, businesses primarily make use of social media platforms such as Facebook and LinkedIn. Internally, businesses make use of networking sites which are only open to employees (Wang & Kobsa, 2009:975).

It is important for the business to utilise resources efficiently when attempting to hire new staff members, however according to Ready, Conger and Hill (2010:2), an unbalanced attention is contributed to the Human Resource operations in hiring and developing people that are high potential future leaders of the business. According to an online survey completed via Careerbuilder.com, statistics prove that in the year 2009 45% of businesses used social media as a screening mechanism for job applications (Vickenair, Elkersh, Yancey & Budden, 2010:7). In context, one way in which social media operates as a communication mechanism to the business is by serving as a tool to assist in the engagement among the employers and the employees, both current and potential (Parry & Solidoro, 2013;121).

A social network can serve as a supportive means of thinking and sharing knowledge as it plays a pivotal role in the development of an effective business and environment

(Xerri & Brunetto, 2011:965). In addition, Xerri and Brunetto (2011:962) claim that another valuable contribution to the business is the fact that social media serves as a problem-solving tool for employees to effectively and efficiently solve problems within the business environment – the retail sector being inclusive.

Furthermore, a study done by the Pew Research Center (2016), state that Facebook, Twitter and other social media platforms are being used more excessively by employees for work-related issues such as to connect or support their colleagues (24 percent of employees), and to solve work-related problems (20 percent of employees). Furthermore, Charoensukmongkol (2014:341) confirms that the need to support a co-worker can cause an increase in the use of social media in the business.

The benefits and drawbacks of using social media in the business – specific to retailers will be discussed in the following section.

2.3.2 The drawbacks of using social media in the business

The active use of social media platforms these days has created some concerns for employers (Munene & Nyaribo, 2013:142), as there is a fine line between using social media for work or personal purposes. Employees can use social media during work-hours for personal use resulting in reduced productivity in the business (Munene & Nyaribo, 2013:141). It is for this reason that there is the perception that it has a negative impact on the business (Leftheriotis & Giannakos, 2014:134). In addition, social media has become so popular amongst the working-class that according to Pike (2014:1), employees can even post negative matters concerning their employers, customers, as well as other staff members such as managers, on social media. Pike (2014:1) adds that many employees practice discourteous language when relating to the business on social media posts. In this context as a leading distraction from task performance in the business, social media tends to fuse leisure and personal issues with job responsibilities, which in effect results to compromises in business performance (Kishokumar, 2016:310).

Moreover, the common social media activities which distract employees in the business, relate to activities are downloading media such as music or movies,

following trends, checking sports scores and creating and engaging in personal networking with friends and family (Munene & Nyaribo, 2013:142). Another drawback of using social media is related to the employment of prospective candidates. Employers have access to social media and there are no restrictions to do background research on candidates using social media (Cillers, 2013:567). However, at times the social media investigations may be perceived as a positive characteristic of social media, however according to Krombholz, Merkl and Weippl (2012:175), platforms such as Facebook can also be used to create an alternative fake profile for popularity and status. Therefore, it can be said that social media profiles are not totally reliable and could mislead employers in making recruitment decisions.

Businesses always face a level of risk regarding the abuse of business resources – a business offering internet is at risk of having employees' rebel against policies by using social media at work for personal use. Below are explanations of some of the risks which the business faces by trying to embrace the notion of social media (Lunday, 2010):

- Businesses who try to embrace social media sometimes face misused work-time when employees access social media on mobile devices during the work hours;
- Sometimes employees are given computers to access social media, along with provided internet access. Employees tend to access unnecessary sites such as 'adult' or 'hate' sites without permission from the business;
- Using the businesses computer to access social media considered as out of bounds or against business policy, leads to possible viruses or malfunctions in the software of the computers at work; and
- Mistakes are sometimes made in sending content via a social media platform to the incorrect receiver, leading to the leakage of valuable information or personal data.

The section to follow relates to how mechanisms can be used to monitor the effective use of social media in the business – such as the retail sector

2.4 THE NEED FOR SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY AND GOVERNANCE

Munene and Nyaribo (2013:142) mention that because the use of social media in the business has become imperative, it is evident that employers cannot prevent the use of social media during work hours. Instead, as a response mechanism to limit the viral misuse of social media affecting the business, businesses create social media policies as well as internet policies (Cillers, 2013:567; Munene & Nyaribo, 2013:142). In addition, Pike (2014:1) comments that policies are in the best interest of the businesses, moulded to what the business considers acceptable practices in using social media which somehow relates to the business. On the other hand, Munene and Nyaribo (2013:142) mention that the concept of social media and internet policies are fairly new to the commercial sector and employers have not developed seamless policies as yet.

Much of the behaviour around the use of social media in the business is based on the culture of the business, as well as the behavioural aspects of the worker (Oxenford, 2011:2). According to the Washington State Department of Transportation (2014:1) the best practice for social media use in the general business should be culturally based, providing information sharing and interaction among staff members. Generally, people are influenced by one another, which mean behaviour is influenced and needs to be dealt with accordingly – it is for this reason that Oxenford (2011:2) states that managers and supervisors of the business are to declare the rules and regulations concerning the use of social media at work. More specifically, to serve as practical guidelines to how social media should be used in the business from an ethical perspective, by the Attorney General's Office (2014:1):

- That social media platforms be considered and defined as an authorised component to help define employee's job duties.
- That social media platforms be used in the business for professional networking, recruitment, etc. purposes only.
- That social media platforms not be utilised during work hours for personal use. A worker will also not be able to use work emails or any other non-personal account belonging to the business, at home or in any other personal capacity.

Social media policies are used for many reasons, all with the main aim of monitoring the extensive use of social media in the business and other institutions. According to Kriel (2015:8), a social media policy encourages employees to use social media for work purposes but requires employees to uphold standards in using social media for private uses during work hours. In the business, employers are inclined to manage the legal risks associated with employee interaction on social networks. To do this an electronic communications policy should be implemented, which monitors employees' access and usage of the internet and requires when using the consent of the employer (Antoniades, 2014:5).

There are several social media platforms, however not all are used within the retail sector. This study focuses on the retail sector, therefore the social media platforms in the section to follow will contain details of the frequently used and most important social media platforms used in the retail sector

2.5 SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS USED IN THE BUSINESS

In the following section, the five best social media platforms used in the business and retail sector such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest and LinkedIn will be discussed (McLeod, 2017). The following section focuses on each of these social media platforms and on how it can be used in the business, specifically leaning towards the retail sector.

2.5.1 Facebook

Facebook is known to be one of the most popular social media platforms. In the year 2016 Carlson (2016:15) stated that there were approximately 1.32 billion active Facebook users in total. According to Clapperton (2009:59) Facebook means keeping in touch with the latest trending updates, one of the perks being that one does not necessarily need to follow someone in order to see what they have posted.

Facebook makes the signing up process simple and easy for all to understand. According to Facebook (2018a), in order to become a member of Facebook individuals must be older than 13 years of age to sign up. In addition, the signing up process

requires one to visit the Facebook webpage and fill in biographical information (age, name and gender), click create account, and confirm email address or cell number.

In order to determine the effect that Facebook as a social media platform has on the retail sector, uses, benefits and drawbacks of Facebook for retailers will be discussed in the section to follow.

2.5.1.1 Uses of Facebook

The reasons for signing up and creating a Facebook account for a business such as retailers are plentiful: from having an opportunity to build a community around your business by building and maintaining relationships; to discovering more about your target audience and driving up sales; to branding by utilising Facebook's features and advertising campaigns. This section will focus on some of the uses of Facebook for retailers.

a) Advertising

Businesses such as retailers can use Facebook groups to advertise their products and services. A Facebook group is created by clicking "add group" on the home page, followed by naming the group, and ending of with clicking "create group" (Ayres, 2018). Therefore, retailers can use Facebook to promote their products by focusing on specific Facebook groups. Furthermore, businesses such as retailers can use these groups to provide solutions and engage in conversations with customers (Coombs, 2017).

In addition, Coombs (2017) mentions that businesses such as retailers can optimise their Facebook business page and offer promotions, deals as well as make business announcements. Furthermore, retailers can make use of Facebook catalogues for their marketing campaigns. Catalogues allow businesses to catalogue the items for advertising via Facebook. Furthermore, word-of-mouth is important for any business including retailers thus retailers should create high-quality content and provide superior services to create brand ambassadors for their business (Michaels, 2017).

Businesses can use Facebook to reach a specific target audience who are most likely to purchase your product or service (Newberry, 2017). Furthermore, the author mentions that Facebook advertising consist of the following:

Table 2.2: Different types of Facebook advertising

Types of Facebook advertising	Description and specifications
Photo advertisements	Photo advertisements include pictures only with texts limited to about 90 characters.
Video advertisements	Video advertisements can be no longer than 120 minutes with a text limit of 90 characters. The specifications of this form of advertising are one video plus text.
Slideshow advertising	Slideshow advertising is a short video limited to 10 still images.
Carousel advertising	Carousel advertisements is a series of up to ten small product advertisements which you choose based on the interests of your target audience. The specifications of Facebook carousel advertisements are up to 10 images or video plus text. With a text limit of 90 characters and a maximum video length of two minutes.
Collection advertisement	Collection advertisements showcase multiple products or features, with a maximum video length of 120 minutes.
Canvas advertising	Canvas advertisements are full-screen advertisements intended to captivate users using text, image and video with a text limit of 500 characters.
Lead advertisements	Lead advertisements generate leads for businesses. This is done by getting interested people to fill out a form in the advertisement with contact details and to then allow a business to follow up with the person.

Source adapted from: Newberry, (2017); Baadsgaard, (2018); Lister, (2018); Patel, (2018).

In light of above Table 2.2, retailers can make use of photo advertisements such as pictures and texts to advertise products/services (Newberry, 2017). Furthermore, retailers can use video advertisements to engage with the target audience. Video advertisements are more eye-catching than pictures and text and can include a whole advertising message that starts playing as soon as viewers scroll past it (Newberry, 2017; Baadsgaard, 2018). Another type of advertising business such as retailers can make use of is slideshow advertising which consists of still images and tends to yield higher returns compared to that of photo advertising (Newberry, 2017). Additionally, retailers can employ carousel advertisements which are used to retarget customers

that have already viewed a product (Baadsgaard, 2018). Lister (2018) further states that carousel advertisements can be used to showcase specific products/services or apps.

In addition, businesses such as retailers can use a collection advertisement to showcase multiple products or features to increase conversion rates (Newberry, 2017). Another type of advertising business such as retailers can make use of is canvas advertising which can be used to captivate users, create brand awareness along with increasing engagement and conversion rates (Patel, 2018; Newberry, 2017). Lastly, businesses such as retailers can utilise lead advertisements which are used to generate leads and connect people with one's business (Newberry, 2018). According to Patel (2018) the problem with lead advertisements is that they cause friction into the conversion process by making users jump from Facebook to a landing page where they must fill out a form. Furthermore, this is difficult and not mobile friendly, creating a poor user experience.

b) Driving sales and awareness

According to Sterling (2018), Facebook have introduced the following to help drive more retail sales, namely, "categories for dynamic advertisements", "store sales optimisation", and "tabs for canvas". The various features along with a description of how small retailers can drive more retail sales through Facebook will be discussed in Table 2.3 below.

Table 2.3: Drive more retail sales through Facebook's features

Features	Description
Categories for dynamic advertisements	Advertise products in a specific category that a shopper has shown interest in.
Store sales optimisation	An algorithm used to find the right audience to display messages to and drive in-store sales.
Tabs for canvas	Tool to personalise catalogue experience.

Source adapted from: Baltagalvis, (2016); Sterling, (2018); (Ekine, 2018).

Businesses such as retailers can make use of "categories for dynamic advertisements" which was created to help retailers grab the attention of customers early in the buying process (Sterling, 2018). Furthermore, Cohen (2018) mentions that this feature

facilitates retailers to advertise their products in a specific category and can be used to drive in-store sales. Furthermore, Cohen (2018) claims that store sales optimisation can help retailers build a bridge between online and offline experiences by helping retailers focus on those most likely to make a purchase in their store.

Additionally, if retailers can use “tabs for canvas” and a customer clicks on an advertisement they will then be taken to a full-screen view where the catalogue will personalise the items according to the interests of the customer (Ekine, 2018; Cohen, 2018). DeMers (2014), mentions that Facebook are testing a “buy” button to be incorporated onto their sites for e-commerce purposes. Furthermore, Facebook has introduced this “buy” button to help small businesses drive sales.

c) Brand awareness

An additional platform that Facebook have recently added is “brand awareness campaigns”, which is used to measure the amount of time people spend viewing different advertisements and then providing businesses with the more likely customers that will recall an advertisement (Baltagalvis, 2016). Furthermore, Standberry (2017) states that advertising via Facebook can create brand awareness by familiarising people with your brand, therefore increasing the purchase of products. Businesses such as retailers can use the ‘like button’ on Facebook pages to enhance brand awareness. Once a viewer likes the business page, the viewer will then be notified when the business updates a status or uploads any information (Business Queensland, 2016). Hovde (2014) declares that to boost awareness businesses should:

- Call for action;
- Have educational and engaging content;
- Utilise word-of-mouth; and
- Respond to comments and monitor the Facebook page.

It is important for retailers to create a sense of urgency by offering promotional items, so people want to visit the business website. According to Beese (2016) this can be achieved by getting people to share your post by providing good quality content. In

addition, retailers should post articles and videos that aren't only product related but solve problems that fans find helpful. Furthermore, retailers should strive for word-of-mouth as this gets people talking about your brand which not only creates awareness but increases sales and profits (Hovde, 2014). Moreover, retailers can make use of the Facebook messenger application to enable transactions and acquire more customers by creating brand awareness (Mariscal, 2017). On the other hand, Long (2017) states that the use of Facebook groups is a good way to attract an engaged community of individuals who are interested in your business.

Facebook has grown to become an important marketing tool for businesses and facilitates in business growth. Facebook has helped businesses reach more potential customers and in return increase sales (Bucek, 2017). Davey (2018) mentions that Facebook is perfect for driving sales, because it helps reach customers you normally would not have the chance to reach.

d) Relationship building through communication

Facebook is used to gather information and to build working relationships through sharing posts, creating a Facebook page, creating groups, Facebook messenger app and making comments (Skeels & Grudin, 2009:99). Adzovie *et al.*, (2017:112) state that Facebook can be used to build good relationships through communication between employees, with potential employees and the media like journalists (McCorkindale, 2010:11). Facebook gives businesses the option to create a business page which is similar to a user profile. A major difference between a user's profile and a business's page, according to Pearlman and Abram (2010:199) is "the default means of interaction, which reflects and accommodates the different type of connection that people have with business in real life". Having a Facebook presence allows the business to reach a larger demographic of potential customers. When creating a Facebook page, it is important for the business's Facebook page to be a direct mirror of the business. Photos are always a nice way to allow the Facebook fans to feel connected to the business thus allowing it to make one's page seem more realistic and helping followers to conveniently find an individual and identify the business through posts in the newsfeed (Pearlman & Abram, 2010:211).

Moreover, McCorkindale (2010:11) states that Facebook posts can create an opportunity for businesses to communicate and connect with customers about product related problems. Islwyn (2018) mention that Facebook is a good tool to improve communication in the business as it allows employees to communicate within a well-known interface using Facebook groups and the Messenger application. According to Mariscal (2017), Facebook Messenger can assist businesses by firstly, allowing businesses to send private emails or messages directly to clients and customers with the required information, secondly, improve communication which leads to directly selling exclusive products and services.

Business by Facebook is a collaborative platform that was created by Facebook which aims to keep members connected. It offers features such as Facebook messenger, video calling, Facebook groups and so forth. It was created to stimulate discussion between team members and enhance productivity among teams and employees (Betters, 2016; Facebook, 2018b).

2.5.1.2 Benefits of Facebook

There are many benefits to using Facebook in the retail sector as indicated in the following section. The ways in which Facebook benefits businesses such as retailers will be discussed.

a) Low-cost advertising tool

Facebook marketing can save businesses a lot of money compared to the more traditional ways of marketing such as advertising on billboards, radio advertisements and so forth (Standberry, 2017). Furthermore, North (2014) states that businesses can spend little money and still reach many customers. According to McLeod (2017), on average Facebook advertising costs about \$0.27 per click and price is determined by the following factors: Advertisement objective, audience, quality of the advertisement, the sector your business is in and the bidding type and amount.

Moreover, Patterson (2013) mentions that some forms of Facebook advertising are free such as creating a Facebook page. Therefore, businesses can save money in

their customer support budget by using this free service to create Facebook pages for each department. Facebook advertising can further benefit small businesses with little start-up capital to start a website, because the sign-up process is completely free (Hassan, 2014). According to Standberry (2017), using Facebook advertising can lower your acquisition costs; because it is cheap, one can cut out investments made in other expensive advertising campaigns.

b) Improving products and customer service

Social media can benefit businesses by serving as a feedback mechanism. Therefore, businesses are starting to realise how social media like Facebook can be used as a customer service tool. One of the main benefits for businesses utilising Facebook is that it allows for direct engagement with customers therefore, providing businesses the opportunity to get feedback and reviews from both satisfied and dissatisfied customers (Hubert, 2016). This type of communication is beneficial for both the customer and the business. Zendesk (2018) mentions that “69% of customers believe fast resolution of the problem is vital to good service.” If a business treats customers with respect and resolve negative feedback promptly it can lead to positive word of mouth and Facebook can then be used as a public relations tool (Hubert, 2016; Hassan, 2014).

According to Patterson (2013) businesses can use Facebook to improve product development and current products being offered. This is done by observing customers comments and reviews not only on the business, but also by seeing what customers are saying about competitors’ products. This information can be used to improve one’s product and service offering.

Furthermore, Baldassarre (2014) mentions that social media platforms are one of the most popular way clients can connect with customer service. Potential customers can query pricing, shipping and receive instant real-time responses without having to install a live chat on the website.

c) Increase target market

According to Danoy (2017), businesses can benefit from Facebook's advertising and posts by reaching new potential clientele who fall within the demographic of people most appealing to the business. Additionally, with over 2.01 billion active users, Facebook has access to a wide variety of people from different walks of life. Standberry (2017) further states that one of the main benefits of Facebook is that customers use it daily. Therefore, one way to increase exposure and gain potential customers is to advertise on Facebook targeting a lookalike audience. This entails people sharing your content with those they think will be interested. (Baldassarre, 2014). Facebook's targeting analytics and methods provide the necessary tools to execute improved strategies for improving the size of the customer base (Danoy, 2017).

Although Facebook boasts numerous advantages for retailers, one needs to consider the drawbacks associated with Facebook. Therefore, the following section will present the drawbacks and shortcomings of using Facebook for retailers in the business.

2.5.1.3 Drawbacks of Facebook

It is important to be aware of negative content on Facebook. Therefore, as a business such as a retailer you need to monitor your Facebook page regularly, because negative and false comments can be posted on your Facebook page which may result in a loss of customers for your business (Webster, 2018a). Creative (2018) advises businesses to make use of reputation management policies to solve customer issues and respond to dissatisfied customers. It is difficult to measure how many people like your page and/or content, because customers can unsubscribe from your Facebook pages updates, which results in customers/followers not seeing your content on their newsfeed unless they visit the page. Gaille (2015) reiterates this by noting how difficult it is to engage with Facebook users who do not like or comment. The author further states that for users to keep receiving content they need to subscribe to page updates. Users can unsubscribe from posts while still counting as page audience, which means promoted feeds will be hidden on the user's newsfeed. Advertising via Facebook can be paid either by cost per click or cost per impressions. Advertisers who have higher

bids are more likely to get their advertisements shown first which puts small businesses at a disadvantage (Webster, 2018a).

Therefore, one would need a reasonable budget to be effective with Facebook paid advertising (Marko, 2016). Using a Facebook page is very time consuming. One must not only keep an eye out for negative reviews and comments, but a business should also respond promptly to any questions or positive suggestions posted by customers. (Webster, 2018a; Marko, 2016). According to Gaille (2015), businesses need to focus on content marketing, customer engagement needs along with fulfilling other social media duties. Therefore, to run a Facebook campaign for a business can be time consuming.

An additional social media platform that can be used by the retail sector is Twitter, which will be presented in detail in the section to follow.

2.5.2 Twitter

Twitter is also known as micro-blogging and is a social media platform that allows people to post messages limited to 140 characters in text (Armstrong & Gao, 2010:222). Business communication via Twitter involves knowledge sharing about the profession of employees, the business itself and employee behaviour. Twitter launched in 2006 as a free microblogging social network that enabled users to post short messages known as tweets that could be viewed by other subscribers, more commonly referred to as followers (Kwon & Sung, 2011:5). According to Quilter (2018:1), “around 76% of Twitter users already follow brands, with retailers making up around 30% of them.”

Twitter, like most social media platforms involve a signing up process to create an account. Therefore Orre (2016:1) has provided the following guidelines to help set-up a twitter account:

Table 2.4: Guidelines to setting up a Twitter account

Setting up a Twitter account	Description and specifications
Create a username name	Decide on a name for the Twitter account limited to 15 characters proceeded by the “@” symbol.
Add an image/photo	Add a photo to the Twitter account, preferably a front-facing and professional photo.
Complete a biographical profile	Limited to 160 characters and used to tell others about the individual or business.
Add a website address	Add a website address which can be linked to other social media platforms such as LinkedIn and Blogs.

Source adapted from: Bennet (2013:1); Orre, (2016:1); Cohn, (2018:1).

According to Orre (2016:1) the first step in creating a Twitter account involves deciding on a name for the Twitter account holder. The individual should try keeping the name short to allow people to find the profile easier and keep in contact more regularly. Hereafter, a photo should be added onto the Twitter account as this allows one to connect with others on a more personal level thus assisting with differentiating one individual from another (Orre, 2016:1). According to Kingston (2012:1) users can further add a header which works with your current profile image and allows you to tell people about your business. Furthermore, the header can serve as a backdrop for your Twitter account information such as the username, profile picture, biographical information and web link.

Thereafter, one should complete a biographical profile -, a well transcribed biography can help one develop connections (Orre, 2016:1). Completing a biographical profile can assist an individual or business to stand out from others and develop friendships and in turn attract followers (Devita, 2012). Furthermore, (Orre, 2016:1) mentions that one should add a website address.

In light of the above, Twitter provides a relatively easy and user-friendly signing-up process along with stand-out feature's businesses can use to their advantage. In the sections to follow more about Twitter's uses, benefits and drawbacks are presented.

2.5.2.1 Uses of Twitter

Ward (2018:1) state that “three-quarter of businesses with an online presence are now using Twitter.” Therefore, it is important for businesses to invest more time into creating awareness for their businesses through Twitter. In the sections to follow the uses Twitter offer to businesses such as retailers will be presented.

a) Communication and information sharing

Knowledge sharing via Twitter can assist employees in creating a professional identity (Van Zoonen *et al.*, 2016:331-332). In addition, the use of Twitter provides employees with a platform to represent their business online and contribute to brand communication. Furthermore, Twitter allows employees the opportunity to share vacancy information, share their opinions and/or comment on work-related issues. In addition, Dreher (2014:345) state that Twitter can be used to strengthen employee’s ability to reach out and communicate with customers, business partners and other stakeholders (e.g. suppliers).

According to Kwon and Sung (2011:5) Twitter can influence business-customer interactions while also providing an optimal vehicle for disseminating corporate information. “The interconnectedness of Twitter users provides a distinctive channel for marketing communication” (Kwon & Sung (2011:6). According to Monaghan (2018:1) using Twitter can assist businesses with distributing content, because tweets are accessible to the public and can be seen by anyone searching. Therefore, those that are not following can still come across your content. Kwon and Sung (2011:6), indicate that by using Twitter to distribute information leads to more traffic to the business websites. According to Quilter (2018:1), “24% use Twitter to stay up-to-date with the latest products, while 22% use it to contact the store.” Furthermore, Saladino (2012) mentions that Twitter can be used for providing information about products and services to customers. Therefore, it is evident that the use of Twitter for communication and information sharing can lead to among others more visitors to the store and improved stakeholder relations for businesses such as retailers.

b) Driving sales

According to Quilter (2018:1), it comes down to sales at the end of the day and Twitter can be used to help improve a business's sales conversion rate. According to Kwon and Sung (2011:6) Twitter can be used with other social media networks to increase sales. In agreement with the aforementioned, Stelzner (2010:1) suggests that social media usage in businesses is used to drive traffic to business websites, rather than for physically selling products and services. Quilter (2018:1) states that "46% of the retail audience have directly linked to a brand asset via Twitter, while 45% have engaged in further research after something in relation to retail." Quilter (2018:1) further mentions that 50% of the retail audience have shown a buying interest either online or by visiting an actual store.

According to Staff (2015), Twitter has created a "buy now" button which takes marketing capabilities a few steps forward- especially for retailers. This option allows brands to develop pages with pricing and other information. Using product-orientated hashtags can allow people to see Tweets from anyone. Campbell (2018) mentions a hashtag as a "label for content" that can be added to a message. Anyone searching for a topic can search that label to find other messages on that specific social media platform. Furthermore, this option allows consumers to view product videos, images and other business-related information that can lead to purchases for online and physical stores. Therefore, Twitter can be used to increase the sales for retailers (Staff, 2015).

c) Advertising

According to Schoolfield (2013), there are three ways a business can use Twitter for advertising. Firstly, a business can create a profile - by creating a profile one creates an image for the business. A business can put a link to their website on Twitter which could lead to possible visitors. Secondly, a business should get posts 'retweeted' - a business can add a Twitter icon to the blog or any other social media platform which can result in improved popularity and attract more traffic. Lastly, a business can tweet special offers - posting about any special offers keeps customers up-to-date and informed. This can lead to interest in the business and potentially more traffic.

Using Twitter advertising allows one to tailor audience lists and launch an advertising campaign targeting visitors who have not closed a sale yet and direct them to the business's website. Furthermore, utilising Twitter will not only gain attraction, but also improve the businesses database. In addition, Twitter's promoted tweet's functionality can help businesses get their message across to their followers at the right time.

In light of the above, the uses often lead to several benefits and drawbacks for utilising the social media platform. Therefore, the benefits and drawbacks will be presented in the following sections.

2.5.2.2 Benefits of Twitter

The sections to follow state how Twitter contributes to the retail sector in terms of communication and customer service, advertising, brand awareness and lead generation.

a) Improving products and customer service

Businesses can draw on the reactions they get from their tweets to better their product and services. This can help create a competitive advantage for the business. In addition, businesses can benefit from Twitter by searching for related business content which can serve as a feedback mechanism. This feature assists businesses with enhancing customer satisfaction through better management and control over customer service. Kwon and Sung (2011:6) state that Twitter can reach all three stages of the marketing process. Pre-purchase refers to marketing research. According to Kaplan and Haenlein (2011:108) the pre-purchase includes for example marketing research. In this regard, one can utilise micro-blogging platforms such as Twitter to conduct studies of online communities. Businesses can benefit from this by investigating what customers are talking about at every moment.

In light of the above, Marko (2017) declares that keeping in touch regularly with customers can help gather information to improve the overall business. Additionally, Twitter is beneficial with keeping customers informed and up-to-date with the latest

business news and updates. Communication is vital to business success therefore businesses should improve their response rate to hold the interests of customers.

b) Lead generation

According to Marko (2017), Twitter creates brand awareness by making it easier for customers to connect and find the business. Furthermore, businesses should inform customers what the business has to offer such as products and services. Customers that are interest in what the business has to offer will follow the businesses Twitter account which can lead to more 'retweets' and potentially more customers. It is important for businesses to tweet relevant content that resonates with the reader. Relevant information leads to customers interacting with the business. Businesses can further generate leads by advertising promotions and sales to encourage participation from customers (Marko, 2017). Moreover, according to Sehgal (2015) advertising via Twitter can generate quick leads and provide real-time gains.

In light of the above, Twitter may be the perfect marketing opportunity for businesses as it may come with several benefits. There are however numerous reasons as to why Twitter's appeal may be limited. Therefore, the next section will present the drawbacks associated with Twitter.

2.5.2.3 Drawbacks of Twitter

Large amounts of reviews are posted on the Twitter platform in the comments section a daily basis. According to Gafni and Golan (2016:44), it is where people express their positive and negative opinions regarding the products and services offered by the business. Several possible drawbacks of Twitter in the retail sector are mentioned below.

One major setback which the commercial sector regards as a contemplator is the fact that 35% of the total reviews are said to be negative comments (Curran, O'Hara & O'Brien, 2011:4). According to Norton (2012) ignoring a customer's negative comments may be regarded as poor service and could lead to damaging the brands reputation. Another factor limiting the extent of the use of the Twitter platform is the

concept of creating campaigns – for every course of campaigns, there are many failures (Curran *et al.*, 2011:5). Twitter is known to be the platform on which many celebrities and businesses become well-known and famous, and the common fact is that the number of followers brings about that level of succession. However, followers are attracted by influence, which is a much harder aspect to maintain – as it requires time and active participation and discussions (Curran *et al.*, 2011:5).

According to Bevan (2016) Twitter advertisements are limited compared to that of Facebook. It is harder to target customers based on interest and certain Twitter features are only available to U.S. advertisers. In addition, it may be difficult to run a successful Twitter advertisement due to lack of user information available.

An additional social media platform that can be used by the retail sector is Pinterest, which will be presented in detail in the section to follow.

2.5.3 Pinterest

Pinterest is a social media platform which aims at connecting people in the world through common interests and consists of images and videos representing the latest interests of society – posts are known as “pinning” and people pin onto their own accounts or onto others’ pinboards (Gilbert *et al.*, 2013:2427; Georgieva, 2013:5). Moreover, this social network allows people to share and comment on this visual material serving as a virtual scrapbook where one can attach images from other peoples’ web pages which seems interesting or helps one in gaining inspiration (BBC Active, 2010), which according to Casna (2017) makes this a very unique social network.

Pinterest pins is a feature on the Pinterest platform allowing individuals to pin content to their own virtual boards on an account – on which friends or customers (followers) can like it and pin it to their very own virtual boards, which is known as “repining” (Nerney, 2017). Pinterest (2018a) agrees that the pinning feature is a simplification tool to help organise one’s ideas, as well as advertise them.

According to Georgieva (2013:7), Pinterest users are intense buyers, and spend more money, more regularly than any of users on other social media sites. Similarly, Perez

(2018) confirms this by stating that Pinterest users have proved to spend more money per purchase than any other social network in the world.

The steps to create a Pinterest account for a business, is firstly to convert the retailers current Pinterest account to a business account; secondly, to complete the business profile in order for the platform to assist users in learning more about the business; thirdly, to create the first board in order to start saving Pins; and lastly, to initiate the creating of the Pins in order to repurpose the retailing image and add helpful details of the retailing operations of the business (Pinterest, 2018a).

2.5.3.1 Uses of Pinterest

Unlike other social media or profile-based platforms, Pinterest accounts are business accounts by default to the public market (Georgieva, 2013:7) – serving as a very good platform for retailers to be discovered and as per the aforementioned sections, assist in the marketing department and serve as a traffic driving tool for these businesses. Pinterest serves as a retailing, as well as a marketing platform in the commercial sector, as it known for advertising branded retail items (Gilbert, *et al.*, 2013:2427). Moreover, Bosovik (2012) mentions that not only is Pinterest good for catching up with trends and keeping up with what's interesting in the world, but it can be used inside the business as a tool to help organise one's desktop and sort images for convenience; to make presentations more appealing by replacing the need for "clipping magazines and gluing them"; giving all individuals in society the opportunity to brand themselves by pinning work onto the Pinterest platform; and lastly to engage directly to customers is seen as a huge retailer advantage as Pinterest is one of the top ten social media sites in the world.

Pinterest as a social media platform, can be used for several purposes such as marketing, sharing content online, recruitment purposes, as well as creating brand awareness, which will be the focus in the subheadings to follow.

a) Marketing tool

Pinterest sends 5% of traffic to other websites and unlike other social media platforms, Pinterest attracts less traffic but receives higher quality traffic with individuals who are ready to shop (Casna, 2017). According to Darnell (2017), it is a statistic that 93% of Pinterest users are planning to purchase products – this serves as a great motive for retail sectors to become actively involved on this particular social network. Furthermore Perez (2018) adds that retailers ought to make their Pinterest pinning strategy user-friendly by organising the board on which to purchase products via Pinterest simple for easier purchasing.

b) Content sharing

Gilbert *et al.* (2013:2427) states that Pinterest users tend to browse through e-commerce sites which leads to these users spending more money on this site than users coming from other social networks such as Facebook and Twitter. In terms of the number of users, Cheng *et al.*, (2017:1) claim that Pinterest is a content sharing platform used by more than 150 million active monthly users. Moreover, Pinterest has grown its' number of users by 4000%, to over 10 million users in 2011. In context, according to Georgieva (2013:7) this social media site receives an estimated 85.5 million new monthly visitors. However more recently, Casna (2017) claims that Pinterest boasts 150 million monthly users. She also adds that at one point, Pinterest was driving more referral traffic than Google Plus, Youtube and LinkedIn combined.

c) Recruitment tool

According to Sogbaike (2017), Pinterest is also used for recruitment purposes as the social network serves as a bookmarking site on which only a few recruiters use it as part of recruitment strategies. However due to the fact that it is digital, it makes it easy to realise talent. Similarly, Nerney (2017) agrees by stating that Pinterest is used more a talent-discovery tool than an average social media platform. In this case a business will be one of the only one's leveraging this platform to hire quality talent, and in turn, according to Sogbaike (2017), most likely to succeed.

d) Creating brand awareness

Vener (2017) states that Pinterest is an ideal place to build brand awareness due to the fact that it is more likely to be a customer's initial touch point in deciding which brand of products to purchase. In addition, it is advised that in order to create brand awareness using Pinterest, the retailer's Pinterest board should contain good and relevant content, which is perceived as an impressive brand identity for customers to become a part of (Pinterest, 2018b).

There are numerous uses for Pinterest as a social media platform in the retail sector, and there are benefits which are linked to the use of Pinterest.

2.5.3.2 Benefits of Pinterest

The sections to follow puts emphasis on the benefits which are associated with the uses of Pinterest as a social media platform in the retailing sector, namely lead generation and drive traffic.

a) Lead generation

One way for a retailer to make sales is by reaching the intended customer base before their minds are made up about a purchase. According to Vener (2018), Pinterest serves as the ideal social media platform to reach customers early due to the high traffic-volume and that 90% of Pinterest users admit to finding ideas on Pinterest as which retail products to purchase. Chandru (2015) confirms by stating that "Pinterest users are inherently open to buying things they find on the site", which means sales are easily generated through the uses of the Pinterest platform. Furthermore, Perez (2018) states that businesses in the retail sector are taking advantage of the ability to drive leads towards a business's website by using Pinterest, and for this reason Pinterest will continue to grow popular in the business.

b) Drive traffic

Pinterest helps businesses such as retailers increase links back to their website - by pinning an image making it simple for brands to link their images back to their website or blog, leading to an increase in online engagement (Montreal, 2015; Strong Coffee Marketing, 2018). Furthermore, Pinterest automatically creates links to page which the images are sourced, so one can easily acquire attractive links – leading to more engagement and an increase in traffic (Letki, 2018). Thus, because of the design being user-friendly it makes it easy to promote specific products/services as well as new landing pages (Gaille, 2016). According to Kautz (2018) Pinterest has “referred more traffic to sites than Google Plus, YouTube and LinkedIn combined.”

As evident from the aforementioned sections, Pinterest serves as a benefiting tool for retailers in many ways; however, there are some drawbacks to this social media platform.

2.5.3.3 Drawbacks of Pinterest

As mentioned above, an advantage of using Pinterest is the uploading and pinning of images, however according to Marco (2017) relying mainly on images puts the branding of retailer at risk, as poor pictures would reflect badly upon the retailer's reputation. Similarly, Burkhart (2018) adds that Pinterest could form the reputation of being “a hub for food and makeup” due to the reputation of Pinterest proceeding itself in being commonly used to advertise food and makeup via image pinning.

A second major issue for Pinterest as a social media is the link spam feature which annoys customers. According to Baer (2018) all links on the Pinterest site are followed up by the use of Google and other search engines, which makes the Pinterest platform vulnerable to the common spam dilemma of the internet – many businesses bombard the Pinterest platform with affiliate website links for shopping as well as other spam, making it harder for retailers to penetrate the market and to achieve customer trust (Burkhart, 2018).

Thirdly Pinterest has many policies, one of which is the copyright policy which according to Pinterest (2018b) states that Pinterest keeps intellectual property private and respects the property rights of all users and potential users. This is intended to protect the user; however, when posting other peoples' images to one's own board could lead to copyright issues and conflict among retailers McIntosh (2008).

It is clear that there are some drawbacks with regards to Pinterest as a social media platform for retailers; however, McIntosh (2008) adds that the key to getting ahead is keeping up with technological trends and that creating a Pinterest account for any business is essential.

The section to follow highlights another popular social media platform used in the retail sector, namely, Instagram.

2.5.4 Instagram

Instagram is a social network which provides individuals with the ease of capturing moments and instantaneously sharing it with friends and relatives through pictures and videos (Hu, *et al.* 2014:1). Similarly, this social network is defined by Nummila (2015:1) as a mobile application which allows users to take photos and “post” them from their mobile devices. The purpose of this social media is to serve as a social link between friends, family, colleagues, and users with commonalities (Herman, 2014:1). Created in 2010 as a hybrid representing a combination of instant camera features and a regular old telegram (Serrano, 2018) Instagram has since attracted more than 150 million users and this platform experiences an average of 55 million photo uploads per day (Hu, *et al.* 2014:2).

There are some steps to creating an Instagram account for a retail sector: firstly, the free mobile or desktop application needs to be downloaded to a device by means of logging onto the Application Store, searching for “Instagram” and clicking download (Balinas, 2018). Secondly, according to Herman (2014:5) an account is to be registered by means of entering a username – the username is an email address which according to Balinas (2018) should be the work email address, which will help with the “Find Friends” feature which is offered by Instagram. Then creating a password should

be to protect the privacy of the retailer (Herman, 2014:4). Lastly, Herman (2014:5) states that the user should find friends, edit the profile accordingly and start interacting with customers. According to Stewart (2018), it is encouraged to link a Facebook account page to the retailer's Instagram account in order to maximise interaction with customers and those of interest.

2.5.4.1 Uses of Instagram

Collier, (2018) states that the main use for creating an Instagram account, is for the retailer to be found by either other retailers or customers, by promoting posts using the Instagram Business Tools in the Advertiser Help Section or by taking a Blueprint e-learning course (Instagram, 2016).

a) Advertising

Instagram's recent feature of rolling out retail sector profiles offers some benefits, one of which is that Instagram can be used for advertising, just like most social media platforms. According to Nummila (2015:1), 50% of the worlds' leading retailers are using Instagram to advertise their product offerings. In context, Instagram's platform seems rather simple. However, in order to maximise the advertising efforts, the retailer needs to utilise features offered by the platform (Universal Class, 2018) in order to improve communication, efficiency and convenience via advertising on the Instagram platform.

b) Brand Awareness

Retailers can create brand awareness on their Instagram account by simply posting images directly to Instagram. Secondly, numerous business accounts can be formed and managed by employees as a team as opposed to assigning one person per account. Retailers can also review the performance of the Instagram posts by closely monitoring the progress and proving the effectiveness of the strategy approach to create awareness of the retail brand (Gillooly, 2017). In context, Collier (2018) suggests that making use of analytical tools offered by Instagram – which is the utilisation of a free or paid third-party tool – known as “Insights” and serve as a

convenient manner to follow how well the Instagram account is working for the retailer. Furthermore, hashtags is an excellent way for retailers to boost their exposure on Instagram, increase exposure and enhance your brand (Chan, 2017). Additionally, retailers can create online competitions to not only reward current follower, but also attract new people to the brand's page.

2.5.4.2 Benefits of Instagram

The subsections to follow will elaborate on how Instagram as a social network benefits the commercial sector – specifically focused on the retail sector.

a) Lead generation

Business starts with a sale – it is therefore important for any business in the retail sector to ensure they meet their specified sales targets. As per the before mentioned sections, Instagram is a useful platform in attracting new customers for any business. According to Brandi (2018), the Instagram platform guides the bottom line sales since a third of Instagram users use this social media platform for purchasing items through links provided on the Instagram platform. Brandi (2018) mentions that Instagram in fact has gained over 800 million active users, 500 million of which have become daily active users – this amount of traffic serves as great potential to obtain more new customers for the retail sector.

b) Connect with customers and reach new audiences

Instagram has an active and engaged user base, generating 120 times more engagement per follower than Twitter (Pinkham, 2018). Therefore, Instagram is beneficial when connecting with customers, collecting customer feedback, and building relationships through conversations. Instagram makes it easy to discover new businesses, people and photos. This can be achieved through hashtags (Pinkham, 2018). Therefore, a retailer can find new customers by simply targeting niche groups and communities with hashtags (Wallace, 2018). Retailers can reach new audiences by posting at the right time with engaging content resulting in the businesses posts

appearing on the top of the followers' and customers newsfeeds (BCMA, 2018). Retailers can create engaging content through contests and giveaways.

The following section remarks upon some of the drawbacks or difficulties which retailers face in using Instagram as a social media platform for their businesses.

2.5.4.3 Drawbacks of Instagram

On the other hand, in order to maintain a good reputation on this social networking platform, a retailer needs to ensure that the Instagram account consists of relevant content, however due to high-end technological advances, customers could be deceived by retailers manipulating the images in order to attract more customers (Instagram, 2018). According to Boogaard (2017), retailers may jeopardise their engagement with customers when affiliated social media platforms require customers to pay for advertisements – switching to a business profile means that the retailer is eager to commence a business activity by selling advertising, and even though it's an affiliate social media's requirement, Instagram customers become despondent because of the required payments. In addition, Soffar (2018) states that Instagram is only available to users with iPhones and Android devices, which means that retailers or any other business may not reach many of its' customers when promoting via Instagram.

2.5.5 LinkedIn

According to Lacho (2010:130), LinkedIn's signing up process is a lot more complicated compared to that of other social media platforms. Duffy (2011:56) further explains that the more detail provided at the sign up, the more benefits the user will be provided with. LinkedIn is made up of two types of account, namely, basics account and paid subscription accounts with the latter providing more benefits to the user (Albrecht, 2011:29). According to Beese (2015), having the following premium accounts may assist businesses in achieving department-specific goals:

- The "LinkedIn Business Plus" premium account which is designed for businesses that are looking to expand their networks; or

- The “Recruiter Lite” premium account which is suitable for businesses with occasional hiring needs or without a dedicated recruiter.

LinkedIn boast numerous uses for businesses such as retailers, and these uses will be presented in the following section.

2.5.5.1 Uses of LinkedIn

LinkedIn specialises and focuses on the development of businesses (Kodicherla *et al.*, 2011:1). The features provided on LinkedIn assist businesses with developing a stronger presence in the marketplace (Kodicherla *et al.*, 2011:2). In the section to follow, several uses of LinkedIn will be discussed.

a) Networking

Networking is used to form and maintain relationships with others (Van Hoyer, Van Hooft & Lievens, 2009:661). According to Mind Tools (2017), LinkedIn assists working professionals with the opportunity to network to connect and share information with other LinkedIn members and businesses. LinkedIn however serves as a new and more convenient way of forming relationships that has impacted the way in which employees interact with one another (Lacho, 2010:127).

Businesses such as retailers can create and join relevant discussion groups to exchange ideas and share industry news (Mind Tools, 2017; Vaughan, 2015). Setting up a group establishes a business as an authority in a respective field that cares about the overall prosperity of the industry. Furthermore, groups can be utilised as a great place for likeminded decision makers to network, to share opinions, generate business and use best practices (Williamson, 2016). Building a network on LinkedIn is fairly straightforward. LinkedIn also provides a very useful method that allows its members to build their networks by enabling them to upload contacts from their mailboxes to send invitations requesting their contacts to join their networks (Thew, 2008:88).

b) Advertising

LinkedIn has been dedicated to the focus of enhancing the presence of businesses on the site by including the “Company Pages” feature which allows businesses such as retailers to advertise their various products and services. This feature also allows members to recommend these products and services (Kodicherla *et al.*, 2011:2). This feature can be hugely beneficial to businesses, more specifically retailers, as it may increase word-of-mouth advertising and brand awareness.

Furthermore, Dave (2017) mentions that LinkedIn business pages can be beneficial to business owners, however McGruer (2014) states that about 90% of businesses on LinkedIn are utilising the platform incorrectly by not setting up their business profiles properly for selling on LinkedIn. Therefore, businesses need to stay updated with the latest LinkedIn features, because creating a business page on LinkedIn can provide the business with a stronger presence in the market, thus the business page would need to be appealing for the viewers (LeChat, 2017).

Considering the above, another feature is the LinkedIn “Showcase Pages” that branch off the businesses main page. The showcase pages are specifically created to promote the products and services provided by a business, as well as to provide a personalised marketing experience for the viewers of the page (Vaughan, 2015:14). Businesses can create a visual experience for prospective customers by making use of LinkedIn’s photo and video features for advertising products and services (Lacho, 2010:131). It is important that business owners ensure that their business profiles are informative and up-to-date with relevant information, such as promotions offsite content and accurate contact details (Williamson, 2016). According to Lacho (2010:129), the consistent use of LinkedIn by businesses is important for the success of the method in advertising business offerings. Therefore, business owners need to develop an understanding of how LinkedIn can be used as a medium of advertising in order to be effective in using the site.

c) Recruiting and potential staff access

Compton, Morrissey and Nankervis (2009:17) state that recruitment is the art of attracting the right kind of employee with the right skills to fill any open or existing vacancies. Recruiting the right employee can be quite pricey, LinkedIn however is regarded as one of the more cost-effective methods of recruiting prospective employees (Witzig *et al.*, 2012:119). Smaller businesses such as store-retailers with a limited budget may benefit from this. Businesses can use LinkedIn to acquire skilled and knowledgeable staff required to perform the businesses responsibilities and planned objectives (LeChat, 2017). LinkedIn has incorporated a “Careers Page” feature allows businesses to list job openings that are available for the general public (Lacho, 2010:131). This feature offers useful information regarding a potential employer and a realistic preview of the job through contact with existing employees (Broughton *et al.*, 2013:2). It also assists individuals on deciding which business could be a better match for them when job hunting, making it easier for businesses to identify potential candidates by considering those who are interested in the job vacancies (Mind Tools, 2017). The information that is displayed by LinkedIn members on their profiles such as their names, experiences, specialities, education and past business experiences provides business owners with the opportunities to identify potential employees (Lacho, 2010:130).

Businesses seeking to recruit employees that possess a specific set of skills and expertise can make use of LinkedIn’s Advance Search feature (Vaughan, 2015:19). With LinkedIn’s advance search option, businesses can refine the level of precision in the search by choosing to rank the results based on things like keyword relevance and proximity in the businesses direct or extended networks (Thew, 2008:88). The advance search option also has a “Save Searches” feature which allows business to save previous searches and LinkedIn will then notify the business by e-mail if there are new people who match the search criteria. Businesses are therefore provided with the opportunity to discover new leads each week (Allan, 2014).

Furthermore, LinkedIn has a strong international following and allows potential employers to assess potential candidates through information provided on the website (Broughton *et al.*, 2013:1).

d) Business website optimisation

Website traffic refers to the numbers of visitors and visits that a website encounters, and it is considered as one of the important tools for achieving success on the web (Marketing terms, 2017). LinkedIn makes it possible for the retail sectors to promote their websites on the social media site which improves the image of businesses and adds value to the messages they would like to communicate (SearchRankExpress, 2017). Driving traffic to the business website sparks conversions amongst viewers, such as downloading content and filling out contact forms, which exposes businesses to new opportunities (Harr, 2016). There are various ways that businesses can use LinkedIn to drive traffic to their websites. According to Williamson (2016), the following are the tools for driving traffic that are available on LinkedIn to all retail sectors:

- The “LinkedIn Developer” site can be used to enhance a business’ website by providing businesses with the ability to link the LinkedIn business page to the business website;
- The “Recommend with LinkedIn” button can be included in a business’s website for customers and clients to recommend the business to other LinkedIn users; and
- The “Share on LinkedIn” plugin can be used on a business’s website which will allow visitors of the site to share it on LinkedIn.

It is mentioned in Dave (2017) that although LinkedIn serves as a great place to drive traffic to a website, this will only work if a business shares original information on the LinkedIn business page. The important content shared by a business must be specifically created for the business’s LinkedIn audience (McGruer, 2014). LinkedIn is a trustworthy platform because people and businesses write about their experiences or shared something that has been proved in a field. Therefore, the content share on LinkedIn is treated more seriously as compared to other social media platforms (Dave, 2017). In order to be successful in the use of online media such as LinkedIn, businesses need to realise that every visitor to the business page could be a potential customer (Schneider, 2007:147). Therefore, LinkedIn should be used to tell it as story about the business in the right way which will inspire potential customers and

employees to find out more about the business by visiting the business website (Mind Tools, 2017).

2.5.5.2 Benefits of LinkedIn

Members will benefit only if they make regular use of the website and ensure that the website is regularly maintained. Some of the benefits are highlighted below.

a) Lead generation and increased online visibility

The active online participation of businesses on a LinkedIn business page has proved to help businesses triple the size of their clientele and to sustain growth (Lacho, 2010:131). LinkedIn has also helped businesses venture into markets where they were previously not exposed, and this has helped grow the businesses networks (Thew, 2008:89).

LinkedIn provides businesses with increased visibility for their brands, products and business goals which enables potential customers and clients to reach the business for future dealings (Mind Tools, 2017). Businesses need to provide relevant content to their target audience citing useful information which would result in them wanting to know more about the business (Dave, 2017).

b) Brand awareness

LinkedIn makes it easy for businesses to target the right people to favour their brands. The more people know about the brands created by businesses, the greater their chances of receiving referrals (LinkedIn, 2017). When it comes to marketing the products and services of a business, LinkedIn's Skills option play a vital role, whereby the business's connection can provide verification on the skills and its knowledge associated with the business (McGruer, 2014).

c) Cost saving

As signing up for LinkedIn is free of charge with most of the functions and options that LinkedIn offers can be used by all account holders, it is therefore saving costs. Broughton *et al.*, (2013:20-21) also states that LinkedIn as an online recruitment tool provides a cost-effective alternative to more traditional ways of recruiting.

In the section to follow, the drawbacks of LinkedIn for businesses such as retailers will be discussed.

2.5.5.3 Drawbacks of LinkedIn

The internet has shown to negatively set back the unemployment duration for job seekers (Garg & Telang, 2012:8). This does not serve LinkedIn well, being the leading social media platform for commercial interaction (Lacho, 2010:127), and more importantly serving as the tool to assist in the recruitment process currently (Mind Tools, 2017). It has become of importance to keep up with the technological era, however not everybody has the resources to do so and even if they do, according to Richards (2012), active participation is of utter importance when using LinkedIn and not everybody does. There are some reputational concerns by the general public regarding LinkedIn – what goes online, stays online according to Richards (2012). This means that LinkedIn has the potential to do great damage to the reputation for individuals in the commercial retail sector. Much like Twitter as mentioned in a previous section of the study, LinkedIn also requires a great deal of time due to the engagement required by the business to meet the social needs of followers as well as that of other businesses interested in the business profile Richards (2012).

These types of drawbacks faced by LinkedIn are setbacks that can be overcome by means of management. It can therefore be said that LinkedIn can be regarded as a much-needed social media platform which can benefit businesses greatly. Social media is used in the general retail sector often enough to be regarded as a force to be reckoned with in the retail sector, but it needs to be monitored in order to ensure the effective use of social media as an organisational tool.

2.6 SUMMARY

Small retail businesses are known for their flexibility in their day-to day operations. Based on the aforementioned benefits of social media to the retail sector, it can be said that if monitored correctly that retailers should consider using social media in the business.

There are however several drawbacks to consider when attempting to utilise social media as a tool within the operations of the business, such as the loss of productivity or the result of negative online reviews on social media platforms which serve as bad publicity for the reputation of the business. As of yet, there is no set structure to completely eliminate the drawbacks associated with social media usage in retail businesses, however the tools to help govern the misuse of social media are called 'social media policies'. The effectiveness of these policies differs based on the nature and corporate culture of the business, but according to the secondary sources in the literature review of this study, it tends to relieve some of the drawbacks.

Small businesses differ from larger corporations in many ways, some of which are linked to the way in which small businesses are more likely to use of social media in day-to-day operations because of the simplicity and the low costs of social media usage making communication affordable.

The social media platforms researched in this chapter was Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest and LinkedIn – all of which serve different functions to the retail sector. It is often that the use of one or more social medias within a business, can affect the entire culture and traditional operational functions of a small retail business. For this reason, an empirical study was undertaken to clarify factors associated with the benefit of using social media in the retail sector. In Chapter 3, the research design and methodology adopted to address the objectives of this study will be explained and clarified.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In chapter one the main objectives of this study were presented, namely to investigate the benefits of using social media in the retail sector in the Nelson Mandela Bay region. The literature overview in Chapter Two provided an in-depth look at what social media is used for in the retail sector, along with the benefits and drawbacks of using social media in the retail sector.

Research is the precise examination and investigation of sources and materials with a specific end goal to set up actualities and achieve new conclusions (Warrier, 2012:1). Furthermore, Webster (2018b:1) adds that research is the careful search of information about a specific subject. Moreover, Bhat (2018) mentions that research is characterised as a careful thought of study with respect to a specific concern or an issue utilising logical technique. According to Struwig and Stead (2013:2) it is important to note that although research differs from information gathering, it shares three interconnected features. Firstly, research is based on an open system of thought allowing researches to think freely and creatively. Secondly, researchers examine data critically. In other words, being able to interpret and understand data. Lastly, researchers generalise and specify limits on their generalisations.

The main purpose of this chapter is to describe the research design and methodology adopted in order to address the primary and secondary objectives. This chapter begins by focusing on the definition of research and research design. An overview of the positivistic and interpretivistic research paradigms and research methods are then provided, followed by a discussion of secondary and primary data collection methods. Furthermore, a discussion on the sample and sampling techniques, development of the measuring instrument will follow, together with the operationalisation of the independent and dependent variables. To conclude this chapter, an overview of the

statistical techniques adopted to analyse the data collected during the empirical investigation is provided.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

For one to conduct research, a research design is required. According to Creswell (2014:41) “research designs are types of inquiry within qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods research approaches that provide specific direction for procedures in a research design.” Moreover, Labaree (2009:1) adds that a research design is a thorough strategy picked by the researcher to coordinate the distinctive parts of a study in an expressive and reasonable way and in doing as such, guarantees the research problem is effectively tended to.

Furthermore, Cooper and Schindler (2014:82) state that the research design of a study represents the blueprint for gathering, measuring and analysing data. In addition, the research design indicates the various ways in which research can be conducted with the aim of answering the research question. In the following section the data analysis methods for qualitative and quantitative research design will be discussed.

3.2.1 Research design followed in quantitative research

In the following section Table 3.1 presents the different types of qualitative and quantitative research design methods.

Table 3.1: Differences between qualitative and quantitative research design methods

Quantitative research design	Qualitative research design
Exploratory and Experimental research	Case study
Explanatory research	Narrative
Descriptive research	Grounded theory

Source adapted from: Saunders *et al.*, (2007:133); Struwig & Stead, (2013:2-23); Cooper & Schindler, (2014:128-170).

Table 3.1 summarises the differences between quantitative research design and qualitative research design. Quantitative research design consists of exploratory,

experimental, explanatory and descriptive research while qualitative research design consists of case study, narrative and grounded theory.

Researchers can choose from various quantitative research designs. In the section below, a discussion on the various quantitative research designs will follow.

3.2.1.1 Exploratory research

According to Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2007:133) exploratory research is useful when wanting to clarify the understanding of a problem. Singh (2007:64) adds that exploratory research is thus used to investigate issues in detail to acquaint oneself with the issue or idea to be examined. Therefore, Saunders *et al.* (2007:133) state that exploratory research can be conducted in three ways which are: to search literature, interview experts in the subject and/or conduct focus group interviews. Cooper and Schindler (2014:139) mention that in most studies exploratory research is the first stage the researcher takes to orient themselves and the study. Additionally, the object of exploration is developing and testing the hypotheses.

3.2.1.2 Experimental research

Blakstad (2008:1) indicates that experimental research is used to determine cause and effect relationships. Therefore, experiments are taken to try and predict phenomena. Furthermore, Bhat (2018a:1) adds that experimental research is any research led with a scientific approach, where an arrangement of variables is kept consistent while the other arrangement of variables is being measured as the subject of experiment. Similarly, Marczyk, DeMatteo & Festinger, (2005:3) mentions that experimental research includes looking at two or more groups on one result measure to test some hypothesis with respect to causation.

3.2.1.3 Explanatory research

Explanatory research attempts to help find a more in-depth and detailed explanation of one's study (Yousaf, 2017:1). Therefore, this type of research is used to help understand the problem in a better way. Cooper and Schindler (2014:22) are of the

opinion that explanatory research goes beyond describing a phenomenon, by also attempting to explain the reasons for why the phenomenon exists.

3.2.1.4 Descriptive research

Descriptive research, as the name proposes, identifies descriptive data about the populace being examined and does not attempt to set up a causal connection between events (Singh, 2007:64). Dulock (1993:154) adds that descriptive research aims to portray systematically and precisely the realities and characteristics of a given populace or area of enthusiasm alongside finding affiliations or connections between or among those variables. Moreover, McNeil (2018:1) mentions that while descriptive research leans towards more qualitative techniques, it can consist of quantifiable data as well.

In the section to follow the research design followed in qualitative research will be discussed.

3.2.2 Research design followed in qualitative research

Researchers can choose from various qualitative research designs. In the section below, a discussion on the various qualitative research designs will follow.

3.2.2.1 Case study

A case study is usually an in-depth study of a single person or a few people, with the goal of providing a complete and accurate description of the case (Marczyk *et al.*, 2005:147; Hyett, Kenny, Dickson-Swift, 2014:1). Shuttleworth (2008:1) adds that case studies are used to limit an expansive field of research into one effectively researchable topic and can be helpful for testing whether scientific theories and models really work in reality. Additionally, Cooper and Schindler (2014:128) state that “case studies place more emphasis on a full contextual analysis of fewer events or conditions and their interrelations.” Moreover, a case study is a research methodology that joins individual and group interviews with record analysis and observation (Cooper & Schindler, 2014:165).

3.2.2.2 Narrative

Narrative research is a term that subsumes a gathering of methodologies that thusly depend on the composed or spoken words or visual portrayal of individuals. These methodologies regularly centre on the lives of individuals as recounted through their own stories (Atlas, 2018:1). Etherington (2013:3) supports this statement by exclaiming that narrative means to “systematically gather, analyse, and represent people’s stories as told by them, which challenges traditional and modernist views of truth, reality, knowledge and personhood.”

3.2.2.3 Grounded theory

According to Cooper and Schindler (2014:658) grounded theory is defined as a research approach, whereby the collection of data, as well as the analyses thereof, takes place concurrently, with the purpose of developing a theory. Furthermore, Struwig and Stead (2013:13) state that this method intends to build theory by creating ideas from the information. The theory is therefore grounded in the information from the study.

3.2.2.4 Level of analysis

The concept of level applies to researchers when considering research designs. According to Bryman and Bell (2011:67) research might focus on the following aspects; namely, individuals, groups, businesses and societies. Individuals are the most common units of analysis in research and include studies that focus on specific kinds of individuals such as managers and students. Furthermore, groups consist of certain types of groupings such as board of directors and study groups, usually groups of multiple individuals are the focus of study. Organisations include studies that focus on the business along with surveys that treat the business as the principal unit of analysis. The last aspect of analysis is societies, which include research on the political, social, environmental and economic contexts in which business organisations are located (Bryman & Bell, 2011:67; Dolma, 2010:170).

In light of the above, for the purpose of this study, a descriptive research design will be undertaken. According to Struwig and Stead (2013:165) descriptive statistics provide statistical summaries of data to provide an overall, straightforward picture of a large amount of data. Furthermore, descriptive research aims to describe and clarify the characteristics of a problem along with the use of statistical analysis, as in the case in this study.

The research design is a systematic approach to follow through with a scientific study (Yousaf, 2017:1). Therefore, the research design should follow a methodology in line with the type of research chosen. In the following section the various research paradigms will be discussed along with selecting the researcher's preferred paradigm and research method.

3.3 RESEARCH PARADIGM AND RESEARCH METHOD

Every researcher has their own view of what constitutes truth and knowledge. These views guide our thinking, beliefs, and our assumptions about society and ourselves, and they frame how we view the world around us, which is what social scientists call a paradigm (Schwandt, 2001:183). Furthermore, Kuhn (1962) adds that a paradigm represents a specific way of thinking that is shared by a community of scientists in solving problems in their field. A paradigm thus implies a pattern, structure and framework or system of scientific and academic ideas, values and assumptions (Olsen, Lodwick, & Dunlap, 1992:16). Therefore, the research methodology adopted depends on the paradigm that guides the research mission. According to Antwi and Hamza (2015:218) paradigms can be characterised through: ontology (what is real), epistemology (how do you know something) and methodology (how do you go about finding out). The answer to questions regarding these three elements provides an interpretative framework that guides the entire research process including strategies, methods and analysis.

Paradigms may be related to specific research methods. As will be discussed more later in this chapter, a positivistic paradigm usually assumes a quantitative method, while an interpretative paradigm usually uses a qualitative method (Patel, 2015:1).

In the sections to follow, a positivistic and interpretative paradigm will be discussed along with quantitative and qualitative research methods. To conclude the research paradigm and method will be chosen along with a table depicting the differences between the two main types of research methods (quantitative and qualitative).

3.3.1 Positivistic research paradigm

A positivistic research paradigm is linked to natural science and implicates empirical testing (Struwig & Stead, 2013:5). A positivist paradigm emphasise that real events may be observed empirically and explained with logical analysis (Kaboub, 2008:343). The positivistic research paradigm maintains that one can understand human behaviour through reason and observation (Nel, 2016:1). In addition, McGregor and Murnane (2010:423) state that within the positivistic research paradigm, it is assumed that the only way individuals can be positive that the knowledge is true is if it was generated using scientific methods. As a result, various authors (Struwig & Stead, 2013:5; Nel, 2016:1; McGregor & Murnane, 2010:420) indicate that data is derived from experimentation and observation, enabling researchers to identify the spontaneous laws to predict human behaviour.

According to Kivunja and Kuyini (2017:30) positivistic research relies on deductive logic, hypotheses, testing the hypotheses, offering operation definition and mathematical equations, calculations, and expressions to derive conclusions. Therefore, this paradigm attempts to make predictions based on measurable outcomes. Moreover, positivist researchers stay clear from respondents to remain emotionally neutral to make clear distinctions between reason and feeling (Edirisingha, 2012:1). Therefore, it can be said that the positivist paradigm is influenced by numerous theories apart from, and as well as, the one which is being tested (Cook & Campbell, 1979:24).

According to Mackenzie and Knipe (2006:4) a positivistic paradigm is often affiliated with a quantitative research method. Various authors (Watson, 2015:44; Struwig & Stead, 2013:6; DeFranzo, 2011:1) add that quantitative research uses numerical data, as data analysis and that quantitative research must be expressed in numbers (e.g. it must be quantified). Therefore, quantitative research is used to quantify opinions,

attitudes, behaviours and other variables gathered from results from a sample/population. Labaree (2009:1) mentions that the goal of quantitative research is to determine the relationship between the independent and dependent variable within a sample. Additionally, quantitative research can either be descriptive or experimental.

In the following section the interpretivistic research paradigm will be discussed.

3.3.2 Interpretivistic research paradigm

The interpretivistic paradigm was developed as a response to positivism. Moreover, interpretivism assumes “that social reality is seen by multiple people and these multiples people interpret events differently leaving multiple perspectives of an incident” (Mack, 2010:8). Furthermore, Wahyuni (2012:71) state that interpretivistic paradigm acknowledges that persons with their own backgrounds, experiences and assumptions contribute to the on-going construction of reality existing in their more extensive social setting through social communication. Thanh and Thanh (2015:24) add that the interpretive paradigm enables researchers to see the world through the recognitions and encounters of the participants. When analysing the answers of the research, the investigator who takes after interpretive paradigm utilises those encounters to build and decipher his comprehension from gathered data. According to Struwig and Stead (2013:11) the interpretivistic paradigm is often affiliated with a qualitative research method and aims to understand the research problem from the participant’s perspective.

According to Patton and Cochran (2002:2) qualitative research makes use of words rather than statistics, as data analysis. Furthermore, Malterud (2001:483) state that qualitative research strategies include the accumulation, organisation, and understanding of documented material from talk and observation. Therefore, qualitative research is concerned with understanding individuals’ encounters in a humanistic, interpretive approach (Jackson *et al.*, 2007:21).

In light of the aforementioned, there are two types of research paradigms, namely, positivistic and interpretivistic. Positivistic research paradigms are affiliated with

quantitative research methods while interpretivistic research paradigms are affiliated with qualitative research methods. The table that follows presents a comparison between qualitative and quantitative research methods.

Table 3.2: Characteristics of qualitative and quantitative research methods

Distinguishing features	Qualitative research method	Quantitative research method
Validity	High	Low
Reliability	Low	High
Use	Makes use of words	Makes use of statistics and numbers
Type of reasoning	Inductive	Deductive
Findings	Talk and observation	Experimentation and observation
Sample size	Small	Large
Nature	Subjective	Objective
Type of approach	Interpretive	Descriptive

Source adapted from: Patton & Cochran, (2002:2); Jackson *et al.*, (2007:21); Struwig & Stead, (2013:17); Cooper & Schindler, (2014:147); Labaree, (2009:1); (Surbhi, (2016a:1).

As evident from Table 3.1, a comparison between qualitative and quantitative research paradigms was presented. Furthermore, the table breaks down the main differences between the two research methods based on validity, reliability, use, type of reasoning, findings, sample size, nature and type of approach. As evident from Table 3.1 among others, qualitative research has high validity but low reliability whereas quantitative research has low validity with high reliability. Furthermore, qualitative research makes use of words and has an inductive type of reasoning while quantitative research makes use of statistics and numbers with a deductive type of reasoning. Additionally, qualitative research has a small sample size with an interpretive approach whereas quantitative research has a larger sample size with a descriptive approach.

In the section to follow the paradigm and method will be chosen and discussed.

3.3.3 Research paradigm and method chosen

The primary objective of this study is to investigate the benefits of using social media in the retail sector in the Nelson Mandela Bay region along with the benefits and

drawbacks of using social media in the retail sector. Thus, given the purpose of this study, a positivistic research paradigm, in conjunction with a quantitative research method will be adopted, since this study requires a sample and statistical techniques in collecting, analysing, and interpreting the data.

In the section to follow the types of studies based on timeline will be discussed.

3.4 TYPE OF STUDY BASED ON TIMELINE

In the section to follow a type of study based on timeline will be discussed with reference to longitudinal and cross-sectional studies.

3.4.1 Longitudinal studies

Cooper and Schindler (2014:128) mention that longitudinal studies are repeated over a long-term period and allow one to keep up with changes over time. Similarly, Saunders *et al.* (2007:601) state that longitudinal studies are studies undertaken over an extended time period. Moreover, longitudinal studies are usually observational in nature, with qualitative and/or quantitative data collected on any mixture of outcomes, with no outside influence (Caruana, Roman, Hernandez-Sanchez & Solli, 2015:537).

3.4.2 Cross-sectional studies

The following researchers, namely Setia (2016:261) and Cherry (2018:1), are of the opinion that cross-sectional studies are observational in nature along with being faster and inexpensive and provide information about a specific population's outcomes or exposures. Moreover, Cooper and Schindler (2014:655) state that cross-sectional studies are "conducted only once and reveals a snapshot of one point in time." Similarly, Cherry (2018:1) mentions that cross-sectional studies take place at a single point in time whilst allowing researchers to look at several characteristics at once (gender, age, etc).

In light of the above, for the purpose of this research a cross-sectional study has been chosen as this study will provide information about a specific population's outcomes

or exposures at one point in time? Whilst looking at several characteristics at once such as age and gender.

3.5 SECONDARY DATA COLLECTION

Secondary research is defined as data that has been gathered for purposes other than the problem at hand which is used to then formulate an appropriate research design (Boslaugh, 2007:2). The sources used to link social media to the work environment are therefore secondary findings that will be statistically analysed. The study contains a literature review that will assist in determining what employed individuals used social media for in the business and the benefit attached to using social media platforms in the retailing sector.

National and international databases were utilised to gather secondary information to aid the purpose of the study. The research for the literature review will be attained from databases such as Emeraldinsight, EBSCOhost, SAGE, research journals and articles, as well as Google Scholar and related books with topics surrounding social media and the retailing.

3.6 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Walwyn (2017:1) defines a research methodology as a way to solve or answer the research problem. Furthermore, Walwyn (2017:1) state that research methodology “can be understood as the process of studying how research is done in a scientific manner.” In the section to follow, the primary data collection, population, sampling methods, data collection methods and data analysis will be discussed in detail.

3.7 PRIMARY DATA COLLECTION

Primary research is the empirical investigation of a study in which the researcher’s approach is a first-hand collection of data for an academic purpose (Driscoll, 2011:154). In other words, primary research is an empirical investigation based on data collected by the researcher personally. The following sections will interpret the

population, sample frame, the various sampling techniques, as well as the measuring instrument used in order to capture the data

3.7.1 Population

The population of an empirical study is a collection of individuals or objects for the main aim of a scientific study (Hassan, 2013). According to Struwig and Stead (2013:114), the population of the study is the focus of the study representing all the elements, units, people and objects involved. For the purpose of this study, the research population were employees operating in the retail sector in the Nelson Mandela Bay region of the Eastern Cape. It is impossible to study an entire population; therefore, researchers made use of a sample to represent an entire population (Shuttleworth, 2009).

The sections to follow consist of the sample frame, sampling techniques, as well as the selection process of the sample which represents the selected population.

3.7.2 Sample frame

The sample frame is defined by Fragniere and Javanmardi (2011:10) as a comprehensive list of the sampling units within the population, from which the sample is drawn. In other words, the sampling frame determines whether a list of the population's units exists or not. It can therefore be said that the sample frame is a complete list of all the respondents in the population.

The sample of this study was distinctive and therefore no comprehensive list was selected for the retail employees in the Nelson Mandela Bay area of the Eastern Cape. However, the sample frame for this study consists of a non-exhaustive list by the researcher's small businesses by means of a referral approach.

3.7.3 Sampling and sampling techniques

Researchers do not do research based on every individual in the population, therefore sampling serves as a practical approach to study individual behaviour, abilities and

activity (Greener, 2008:47). Moreover, Fragnier and Javanmardi (2011:5) define sampling as the act of selecting a suitable sample of a population in order to determine the characteristics of the entire population. Shuttleworth (2009) states that sampling is a subsection of the population chosen to represent the entire population, perform an empirical research on the selected sample, and finally draw conclusions back on the population as a whole.

Greener (2008:47) and Hassan (2013) both agree that there are two sampling techniques, namely probability and non-probability sampling. Hassan (2013) defines probability sampling as a deliberate and unbiased approach to selecting sample units, where all candidates within a sample have an equal chance of being selected. Non-probability sampling on the other hand, is a more calculated approach to the research as the sample selection is based on the choices of the investigator (Alvi, 2016:12). The objective of this study was to compile a list of the sample population in order to gather information to represent the population as a whole.

According to Struwig and Stead (2013:119), there are among other sampling methods, simple random, systematic, stratified and cluster sampling, which is discussed in the following section.

3.7.3.1 Probability sampling techniques

Simple random sampling is the basic selection process of sampling where each member within a population has an equal opportunity of being selected as the sample (Frerichs, 2008:2). Similarly, Hassan (2013) states that there are many approaches to this method – researchers could simply ensure that all the members of the population are included in the list and then approach the selection randomly based on the desired number of subjects.

Systematic sampling is done without using random numbers and selecting a random sample for the study (Greener, 2008:49). Therefore, instead of choosing subjects at random, this method selects subjects in a systematic order, and could therefore be approached in any manner which yields a systematic approach.

Stratified sampling is undertaken when the population of the study is divided into subgroups (Struwig & Stead, 2013:119), and includes any selected characteristic which serves as a set of criteria for the population. Thereafter, the random sampling or systematic sampling is to be completed in order to achieve the stratified sampling approach (Greener, 2008:49).

Cluster sampling is done when simple random sampling is not practically possible (Struwig & Stead, 2013:119). The researcher sub-divides the population into groups in order for all candidates to have an equal opportunity to be selected (Hassan, 2013).

3.7.3.2 Non-probability sampling techniques

According to Alvi (2016:28), there are several non-probability sampling techniques, such as purposive sampling, snowball sampling and convenience sampling. These techniques will be mentioned and discussed below.

Purposive sampling is where researchers use their own judgement in selecting a sample (Greener, 2008:49; Struwig & Stead, 2013:116). As a result of the data being very bias and limited to one approach, the selected data could therefore seem very specific or unusual.

Snowball sampling is defined as a chain approach to sampling, where one element of the population is approached and asked for referrals in order to find other elements (Alvi, 2016:32). According to Hassan (2013), this approach is used when it is difficult to identify potential subjects for the study.

Convenience sampling is a sampling technique where subjects are selected based on convenience, proximity and accessibility to the researcher (Hassan, 2013). It can therefore be said that candidates are purely selected based on availability. In addition, Greener (2008:48) mentions that this approach is common where time is insufficient, therefore the results from convenience sampling cannot be generalised to the population due to the uneven distribution.

Due to the size of the population and the unavailability of a complete sample frame, the approach selected for the purpose of this study is convenience sampling. The ease

in attaining the desired feedback from retail respondents in the Eastern Cape made convenience sampling the most suitable approach. The sample will be evaluated by an appropriated measurement instrument to be discussed in sections to follow.

3.8 DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Research methodology is a way of obtaining, organising, and analysing data and it includes the data collection and analysis techniques employed in the study (Marczyk *et al.* 2005:22). In the sections that follow the data collection methods for quantitative and qualitative research will be discussed, as well as the measuring instrument used in gathering the empirical data of the study.

3.8.1 Data collection methods followed in quantitative research

3.8.1.1 Survey

According to Cooper and Schindler (2014:219) a survey is a measurement process to collect information from participants about a topic with the goal of getting comparable data from a sample to analyse similarities and differences. Furthermore, a survey can be used to get information relatively quickly from a large sample of individuals (Brant, Haas-Haseman, Wei & Wickham, 2015:168).

3.8.1.2 Experiments

According to the Institute for Work and Health (2016:1) experiments are when researchers set up an intervention and then study the outcomes. In addition, experiments are normally random, meaning subjects are grouped by chance. Moreover, various researchers mention that experiments are a way of gathering information and then determining the relationship between one variable and another (Global, 2018:1; Tierney, 2008:1).

In the section to follow the data collection methods employed in qualitative research will be discussed.

3.8.2 Data collection methods followed in a qualitative research

In the section to follow the data collection methods employed in qualitative research will be presented.

3.8.2.1 Focus groups

Focus groups are qualitative and entail asking open-ended questions to participants passing on thoughts or feelings (Kokemuller, 2018:1). Furthermore, Struwig and Stead (2013:102-103) are of the opinion that a focus group study is a strategic discussion, between four and twelve participants, in order to obtain perceptions from participants, about the particular topic in question, in a safe and comfortable setting.

3.8.2.2 In-depth interviews and open-ended interviews

According to Boyce and Neale (2006:3) in-depth interviews are individual interviews with a small number of respondents to look at their perception on a specific idea, program, or situation. In addition, the authors state the primary advantage of an in-depth interview is that they supply more detailed information than what other data collection methods can. Furthermore, in-depth interviews are more structured than narrative interviews and allow for communication to happen more freely compared to that of semi-structured interviews (Saunders *et al.* 2007:312; Crinson, Leontowitsch & Morgan, 2016:1).

According to Struwig and Stead (2013:102) open-ended interviews are the most common type of interview in qualitative research. Furthermore, it is the least structured type of interview, whereby the interviewer has no pre-determined questions. Furthermore, Thibodeaux (2018:1) exclaims that open-ended interviews are used to gather information from participants/respondents. It can be divided into three categories, namely; informal (least restrictive), interview guide (semi-restrictive) and structured (restrictive).

3.8.2.3 Observation

According to Walshe, Ewing and Griffiths (2012:1048) observational research is important when wanting to understand the roles, actions and behaviour of people. Furthermore, Kawulich (2005:5) mention that observational research can benefit researchers in a few ways. For example, researchers can look out for nonverbal expressions of feelings, determine who interacts with who, understand how participants communicate and socialise with each other, and observe how much time is spent on different activities. Cooper and Schindler (2014:144) researchers who observe participants can capture the behaviour of participants as it occurs, overcoming the filler shortages associated with interviewing.

3.8.3 Measuring instrument

In accordance with the research methodology, a structured questionnaire was used to obtain primary data to be used to statistically analyse the empirical study. The empirical study was deduced from a survey due to the large sample size of the study. The respondents approached were asked to complete the closed-ended questionnaire in their own capacity. The questionnaire contains a cover letter. The cover letter of the questionnaire focuses on the distinguishing the research topic, purpose and objectivity of the study, as well as ensuring that the respondent's confidentiality is ensured. In addition, instructions were provided in order to guide respondents in completing the questionnaire with ease and efficiency.

There are six sets of questions, namely Section A (demographic information), Section B (Access and frequency of social media usage), Section C (Social media uses), Section D (Social media benefits), Section E (Social media drawbacks), and lastly Section F (Social media policy and governance), as can be seen in Annexure A.

In the section to follow, a summary of the operationalisation of the variables contained in the questionnaire will be discussed and tabulated.

3.9 SUMMARY OF THE OPERATIONALISATION OF THE VARIABLES

This section comprises of a varied and all-inclusive scale, developed to define terms and measuring influences concerning these factors. The factors are based on the

empirical data collected in *Annexure A* (See attachment) from the 5-point Likert scaled tables.

Table 3.3: Operationalisation definitions

Definition of factors	Sources
<i>Social media is used to collect information</i> to empower employees to solve work-related problems by receiving newsfeeds to learn and receive up-to-date market developments and new innovative trends.	Newberry (2017); Business Queensland (2016); Long (2017); Business Queensland, (2016); Hovde (2014); Amadeo (2018)
<i>Social media is used to market products and services</i> to attract customers to purchase the business offerings by advertising online to target customers to drive customer traffic and create more business to business interaction. Retailers are then able to inexpensively advertise all their product ranges to the target customers.	Baadsgaard (2018); Newberry (2017); Patel (2018); Baltagalvis (2016); Cohen (2018); Ekine (2018); DeMers (2014); Quilter (2018); Gaille (2015); Standberry, (2017)
<i>Social media is used for employee engagement</i> between colleagues and management to express concerns and other business matters freely, and refers to potential staff, relating to the way in which the business uses social media to communicate and recruit potential candidates.	Betters (2016); Facebook (2018a); Van Zoonen <i>et al.</i> , (2016:331-332); Dreher (2014:345); Parry & Solidoro (2013:121); Newberry (2017); Hubert (2016);
<i>Social media is used to engage with</i> existing or new customers to ensure a level of customer relationship and to manage and maintain it in order to attain customer loyalty. The engagement with customers involves feedback from customers in order to allow retailers to satisfy customer needs.	McCorkindale (2010:11); Mariscal (2017); Vickenair <i>et al.</i> , (2010:7); Parry & Solidoro (2013:121); Coombs (2017); Kiron, Palmer, Phillips & Krushwitz (2012:52)
<i>Social media benefits the retail business</i> as it is efficient when it comes to task completion, creating brand awareness, increased collaboration with other retailers and the communication process being positively influenced. The ease of access to competitive information, effective and convenient recruitment and being able to anticipate the moves of competitors, are some of the benefits associated with social media.	Xerri & Brunetto (2011:962); Ready <i>et al.</i> , (2010:2); Mattern (2017); Miller-Meller (2015); Betters (2016); Facebook (2018a); Cao <i>et al.</i> , (2012:3938);

After the data has been obtained from the respondents, it is to be analysed according to the reliability and validity of the data. This will be elaborated on in the section to follow.

3.10 DATA ANALYSIS

Sridhar (2018) defines data analysis to be the process of using analytical and statistical mechanisms to evaluate a set of data, in the aim of making new discoveries and help in guiding business decision-making. Furthermore, Flick (2013:3) states that

data analysis does not only determine the outcomes of a research, but it also is said to be the “central step in qualitative research”. For the purpose of this study, as previously mentioned, primary research was gathered by means of questionnaires and the data was captured in a Microsoft Excel worksheet wherein the data was captured accordingly. Subsequently, the reliability and validity of the data was established by means of STATISTICA and finally, further analysed statistically.

In order to create a detailed understanding in regard to the concept of data analysis, the sections to follow will elaborate on the data analysis methods such as reliability, variability, descriptive statistics and inferential statistics.

3.10.1 Validity

The validity of data is the extent to which the results of a particular research represent the outcome which was expected or anticipated from the occurrence of that specific event (Price, Jhangiani & Chiang, 2015). Moreover, Perakyla (2011: 365) refers to the validity of research as a form of measurement where the results of a specific group of data makes sense when there is a specific form of estimate involved, which in actual fact was positive – validity is therefore an approach to research which measures what it claims to measure is a valid approach (McLeod, 2013).

Validity can be established in two ways namely internal validity and external validity, which will be distinguished in the sections to follow. Various researchers mention that validity can be either external or internal (Cooper & Schindler, 2014:257; Struwig & Stead, 2013:143). The researchers thus imply that external validity refers to generalising the data and results of a study to other persons and settings, whereas, internal validity is the ability of the research instrument to measure what it is meant to measure. Research is known to have high external validity when the research is applicable to a range of given situations. On the other hand, in order to obtain high internal validity, the research results should prove to be effective in various circumstances (Stephanie, 2011). In an attempt to determine the validity of this study, according to Salkind (2012:152) there are four basic approaches which can be utilised by researchers in order to discover whether their research is valid – content, face, criterion and construct validity.

Content validity, according to Shuttleworth (2009), is the actual estimate of how much each element measures the construct of variables within a test. In context, content validity measures how well the quality and skill reflect what the research was intending to discover (Criteria Corp, 2018). Therefore, in content validity, the items within a research study needs to be compared to the expected criteria.

Face validity is defined by Phillips and Gully (2012:217) to be a measuring instrument to determine how well a set of data reflects what it intends to measure. It is the simple measure of whether a set of data appears to be a valid measure of a given variable (Lund Research Ltd, 2012). This is considered the weakest form of validity due to the fact that it is a subjective attempt at determining the reflection of a set of data.

Criterion validity serves as a type of evidence that the outcomes of a research can be predicted by means of a survey instrument (Scale, 2018), which in actual fact according to Salkind (2010) measures how well the scores on one set of research define elements of another set of research. Therefore, criterion validity contains a form of predicting validity, as well as containing the element of concurrency in regard to the strength of measurements intended to predict the expected criterion.

Construct validity determines the extent to which a test determines what it is supposed to measure (McLeod, 2013). This is usually achieved by comparing the correlation with other tests in order to determine how in line the test is with the expected result (Criteria Corp, 2018). Furthermore, McLeod (2013) adds that construct validity does not determine how well the test variables happen to measure an attribute; instead this form of validity attempts to measure how well the test explains several other similar research findings.

For the purpose of this study, content validity was used to compare items in the questionnaire which was based on the literature review. In addition, construct validity is reflected in an EFA to measure the validity of the independent variables and the dependent variable.

Maree (2007:219) mentions that the purpose of a factor analysis is to figure out which factors belong together in the sense that they are addressed correspondingly and, in this manner, measure a similar factor. Therefore, exploratory factor analysis is an exploratory method: researchers' employ to search for the smaller set of latent factors to represent the larger set of variables (Henson & Roberts, 2006:395). In context, Maree (2007:219) mentions that one can use eigenvalues to determine the number of significant factors. Additionally, it is said that there are as many factors as the number of eigenvalues greater than one. According to Williams, Onsman and Brown (2010:6), factor extraction is the process of categorising many items into factors in order to create multiple decision rules for research purposes. It is a simplification process due to the confusing nature of factor analysis.

A factor analysis matrix comprises of columns representing the few factors created from the observed relations among variables in addition to the correlations between each variable and each factor – called the factor loadings (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:472). Thus, a loading of 0.5 or more indicates a stable and strong factor. Costello and Osborne (2008:5) state that a factor with fewer than three items is generally weak or unstable.

3.10.2 Reliability

On the other hand, however, when the results from a particular research remain consistent and steady, it is said to be reliable data (Yasar & Cogenli, 2014:505; Price, *et. al*, 2015). It can therefore be said that the reliability of a set of data is determined by how likely the input is to produce the same result consistently. In actual fact, valid data is more likely to be reliable data, however, reliable data may not always be valid data.

In context with the abovementioned descriptions of validity and reliability, Tavakol and Dennick (2011) claim that these concepts are the two fundamental elements in determining the value of a measuring instrument. Furthermore, the authors define the Cronbach's alpha coefficient to be the calculation which determines the actual correlation between two or more variables. For the purpose of this study, the reliability of the measuring instrument was tested with Cronbach's alpha coefficients. In addition,

Zikmund, Babin, Carr and Griffin (2013:302) suggests that a good reliability is demonstrated by the coefficient bigger than 0.7, while the range 0.6 to 0.7 reflect a fair level of reliability, the coefficients smaller than 0.6 are generally considered unreliable. The cut-off point used in this study for the given data was 0.7.

The two sections to follow will distinguish between the different types of data analysis methods, namely descriptive and inferential statistics, as well as indicate which methods were used in this study. In addition, for most research studies, both descriptive statistics and inferential statistics are completed on the study in order to thoroughly analyse the results and create a comprehensive conclusion to define the data (Lund Research Ltd, 2018).

3.10.3 Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics help analyse a given set of data by means of showing or summarising the data in a meaningful way which involves statistical procedures (Lund Research Ltd, 2018; Taylor, 2018). For the purpose of this study, descriptive statistics are used to provide basic information based on the variable in the dataset, and to highlight the correlation and in turn, the potential relationship between the variables. In addition, Taylor (2018) states that the measures of spread describe the way in which data correlates and below are some of the popular forms of descriptive statistics:

- The range: presents the entire range of values present in a data set;
- The range: presents the entire range of values present in a data set;
- The mean: indicates the measure of central tendency to reflect an average score;
- The mode: the score which occurs the most in a set of data;
- Median: denotes the middle value of the sorted set of data;
- Standard deviation: The positive square root of the variance, which is the difference between each observation and the mean score.

For the purpose of this study, from the items listed above, the mean and standard deviation will be used in Chapter 4 to determine the average data in order to represent

the sets of data. Furthermore, the devices and frequency used to access social media platforms will be discussed in Chapter 4.

3.10.4 Inferential Statistics

As mentioned before, a sample is a portion of a larger population of data. According to Lund Research Ltd. (2018), studies cannot generally be done on an entire population and therefore researchers make use of samples in order to account for the statistics of the entire population. Taylor (2018) concludes that this approach to research is defined as inferential statistics, which uses a set of algorithms in order to match the sample data to what it would be for the entire population. There are numerous approaches to inferential statistics such as Pearson's product moment correlation coefficient, and Multiple regression analysis (MRA).

3.10.4.1 Pearson's product moment correlation coefficient

Pearson's product moment correlation coefficient – is denoted by r – is the method used by researchers as the measure of the strength and direction of a straight-line correlation between two variables in each study (Lund Research Ltd, 2018). It can therefore be said that symbol r resembles how much the independent variables influences the change in the dependent variable. By its' definition, the correlation coefficient is assumed to be any value between +1 and -1 (Ratner, 2009).

The results of the study will be interpreted according to the abovementioned bullet-points in order to determine the relationships between specified variables.

3.10.4.2 Multiple regression analysis

For the purpose of this study, multiple regression analysis was completed in order to determine the uses of social media in the business and whether there is a relationship between the benefits of social media usage as a result of the retail sector (dependent variables), and information collecting, marketing, employee engagement and customer engagement (independent variables). Similarly, Collins and Hussey

(2009:274) agree that multiple regression analysis is a well-valued approach to a study done on one dependent variable depending on several independent variables.

In conducting the multiple regression analysis, the p-values, along with the t-values and the Beta values, were used to determine the strength of the dependent and independent variables associated with this study.

3.11 SUMMARY

In conclusion, chapter three provided definitions of concepts around research methodology as well as the approach which the researchers took to complete the research design methodology. Moreover, the research design was focused on the qualitative and quantitative elements which define the primary research within the study.

Relative secondary data was defined and distinguished within this chapter, and then elaborated on in order to create a comprehensive interpretation of the influencing variables. Also, the instrument which measures the strength of the outlying variables was also distinguished and elaborated on accordingly. The data analysis section included validity and reliability as well as a comprehensive overview regarding the associated statistical techniques which were used when researchers were analysing the data. In order to assess the validity of the measuring instrument, exploratory factor analysis was selected, and Cronbach's alpha was chosen to assess the reliability of the research instruments. Thereafter, descriptive statistics and frequency were calculated to summarise and allow interpretation of the data. Furthermore, Pearson's Product Moment Correlation was calculated to determine correlations to calculate correlations among variables. Moreover, data related to Multicollinearity was looked at to suggest whether the independent variables were free from collinearity. In addition, multiple regression analysis methods were undertaken to test the variables of the proposed hypotheses. The empirical findings of this study will be presented in Chapter Four.

CHAPTER FOUR

EMPIRICAL RESULTS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In chapter three, an overview of the research design and methodology adapted for this study was presented. Furthermore, a discussion on the research design such as the research paradigm, approaches and methods were presented along with a discussion on research methodology, population, sampling methods, data collection methods, data analysis, measuring instrument and a summary of the operationalisation of variables. Moreover, several statistical techniques that were used to analyse the collected data were elaborated on. The results obtained from the 101 retail businesses in the Nelson Mandela Bay Metropolitan will be presented in this chapter.

Chapter four will commence by providing a summary of the demographic information of respondents who participate in the study. This will be followed by the results of the exploratory factor analysis that was used to assess the validity of the various constructs, while the reliability of the constructs was assessed using Cronbach's alpha coefficients. Furthermore, there will be a discussion on the empirical findings, including descriptive statistics, inferential statistics such as the Pearson's product moment correlation and multi-collinearity followed by a discussion on the multiple regression analyses.

4.2 DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS AND THEIR BUSINESS

Section A of the questionnaire required respondents to complete 11 questions relating to the demographic information of the respondent and their business. Table 4.1 provides a summary of the demographic information pertaining to respondents.

Table 4.1: Employment profile of demographic respondents

Variable	Category	Percentage
Job position	Owner	5
	Manager	31
	Employee	64
Number of years employed	0-5	50
	6-10	26
	11-15	12
	16-20	10
	20+	2
Retail business employed in	Clothing	28
	Cosmetics	10
	Furniture	2
	Food	16
	Jewellery	5
	Hardware	2
	Electronics	1
	Electrical appliances	4
	Sport equipment	3
	Gifts	3
	Alcohol	4
	Groceries	1
	Home decor	4
	Garden supplies	2
	Cellular products	7
	Shoes	1
	Carpet	1
	Tobacco	2
	Music	3
	Pharmaceutical products	1
How many years the business has been in existence	0-5	10
	6-10	16
	11-15	19
	16-20	11
	20+	44
The number of employees in the business	0-10	38
	11-20	13
	21-30	12
	31-40	4
	40-50	34

In light of the above, it is evident that most of the respondents (64 percent) who participated in the study were the employees in the retail sector. Additionally, only 31 percent of the respondents were managers followed by 5 percent of the respondents being the owner. Furthermore, it is noted that 50 percent of the respondents were employed in the retail sector for less than six years with only 26 percent of the

respondents being employed in the retail sector between six and ten years. Moreover, 22 percent of the respondents have been employed in the retail sector for more than 11 years but less than 20 years while only two percent of the respondents were employed for a period of longer than twenty years in the retail sector.

Twenty-eight percent and 16 percent of respondents indicated that the retailer operates in the clothing or food sector respectively. In addition, 10 percent and 7 percent of the respondents indicated that the retailer operates in the cosmetic or cellular products sector respectively. Furthermore, five percent of the respondents indicated that they operate in the jewellery retailing sector while four percent of respondents indicated that they operate in the alcohol, home décor or electrical appliances sector respectively. The retailing sectors with the lowest level of response with only one percent were from the electronics, groceries, shoes, carpet and pharmaceutical products sector. Most retailers (44 percent) had been in existence for longer than twenty years, while only 10 percent of retailers existing for less than six years. From Table 4.1 it can be seen that 38 percent of small retail businesses had less than 11 employees, while four percent of small retail businesses had between 31 and 40 employees, and 34 percent of the retailers having between 40 and 50 employees.

The following Table 4.2 consists of the demographic information collected from the respondent's profile, such as gender; age; ethnicity; home language; highest level of education; as well as the marital status of the respondent. This is then followed by a discussion pertaining to the statistics of the demographic findings.

Table 4.2: Demographic respondent profile

Variable	Category	percentage
Gender	Male	46
	Female	54
Age	18-25	39
	26-35	37
	36-45	18
	46-55	4
	56-65	2
Ethnic affiliation	Black	23
	White	37
	Coloured	36

	Asian	4
Home language	Afrikaans	38
	English	35
	French	1
	Mandarin	1
	Xhosa	18
	English and Afrikaans	4
	Xhosa and Sesotho	1
	Sotho	1
	English and Chinese	1
Highest level of education	Grade 12	53
	Certificate	16
	Diploma	23
	Degree	7
	Post-graduate degree	1
Marital status	Divorced	5
	Living together	15
	Married	30
	Unmarried	50

In Table 4.2 it is observed that there were more female respondents (54 percent) compared to that of males (46 percent). The most dominant groups about age were between the ages of 18 and 25 years (39%), followed by the age groups of 26 and 35 (37 percent). Furthermore, only two percent were above the age of 55 years old. In terms of race, 37 percent of the respondents were White, 36 percent were Coloured, followed by 23 percent Black, with only 4 percent being Asian. Majority of the respondents had either Afrikaans (38 percent) or English (35 percent) as a home language with only four percent of respondents having both English and Afrikaans as a home language. Furthermore, the languages with the lowest percentage of response (one percent) were French, Mandarin and Sotho along with a combination of Xhosa and Sesotho or English and Chinese. In addition, 53 percent of the respondents have a Grade 12, while only one percent of the respondents have a post graduate degree. Lastly, Table 4.2 indicates that half of the respondents (50 percent) were unmarried and only 30 percent are married.

In the section to follow, the results of the exploratory factors analysis, validity and reliability will be presented.

4.3 RESULTS OF THE EXPLORATORY FACTOR ANALYSIS, VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

For the purpose of this study, factor analysis is used to establish construct validity, which is defined by Allen (2017) as a logical inference which measures and tests the accuracy of results from a study in order to serve as empirical evidence to support arguments relating to the findings. Furthermore, for the purpose of this study, items that cross-loaded were eliminated, and only factors with two or more items loading onto them were considered for further statistical analysis.

Factor loadings of 0.5 or more were considered for establishing the validity of the measuring instrument, while reliability was tested using Cronbach alpha coefficients. According to Manerikar and Manerikar (2015:117-118) Cronbach alpha estimates are between 0 and less than 1. In addition, as a rule of thumb a 0.70 or higher is regarded as reliable with values between >0.70 and <0.90 being regarded as good with 0.90 being excellent. For the purpose of this study, a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.7 was deemed significant.

The discussions that ensued will start by assessing the validity and reliability of social media drawbacks; followed by social media in the business and dependent and independent variables. To establish the validity and reliability of the construct's social media drawbacks and social media monitoring, and EFA was conducted identifying valid items of the construct, followed by calculating the Cronbach's alphas of the valid constructs.

4.3.1 Factor matrix for social media drawbacks

Table 4.3 summarises the results of the EFA which extracted the items that loaded, as well as the Cronbach's alpha (α) of each item and the overall construct.

Table 4.3: Social media drawbacks

% of variance = 7.17		Cronbach alpha = 0.912		
Items	Statement	Factor loading	Item-Totl Correl.	Alpha deleted
RIS1	Loosing work-time due to using it for personal communication	0.600	0.522	0.908
RIS2	Negative online publicity been spread	0.660	0.583	0.906
RIS3	Posting of negative online comments by an employee	0.704	0.632	0.904
RIS4	Sharing negative feelings to clients online	0.725	0.648	0.904
RIS5	Poor work quality due to too much time online for personal reasons	0.679	0.604	0.905
RIS6	Work reputation being tarnished through customers/clients' online postings	0.700	0.623	0.905
RIS7	Personal relationships between employee and customer/client	0.517	0.468	0.909
RIS8	Personal relationships between colleagues	0.571	0.522	0.908
RIS9	Employees claiming online information as their own	0.638	0.584	0.906
RIS10	Increased stress levels due to higher work expectations	0.614	0.553	0.907
RIS11	Managers intimidating employees	0.561	0.480	0.909
RIS12	The business being exposed to malware or viruses	0.626	0.555	0.907
RIS13	Loss of customers due to negative comments	0.836	0.800	0.900
RIS14	Increased expenses due to excessive use of data	0.633	0.565	0.907
RIS15	Leakage of confidential business information	0.688	0.614	0.905
RIS16	Business reputation being tarnished due to customers/clients' negative comments/reviews	0.772	0.710	0.902
RIS17	Loosing valuable staff headhunted by other retailers	0.577	0.507	0.908

From Table 4.3 it can be seen that all of the factors originally intended to measure *Social media drawbacks* loaded together (RIS1-RIS17) onto this factor with factor loadings above 0.5. The factor loadings for the *Social media drawbacks* construct ranged between 0.517 and 0.836. This construct explained 7.17% of the variance found in the data and the factor loadings provided enough evidence that the scale measuring this construct was valid. Furthermore, a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.912 was reported for this factor, which is greater than the 0.7 cut-off point, indicating high reliability. Therefore, enough evidence of validity and reliability for the scale measuring *Social media drawbacks* was provided.

Social media drawbacks refer to the drawback caused by using social media regarding loss of work time, losing staff, effecting the brand.

In the section to follow the results of the exploratory factor analysis regarding social media in the business will be discussed.

4.3.2 Social media in the business

Table 4.4 summarises the results of the EFA which extracted the items that loaded, as well as indicating the Cronbach's alpha (α) of each item and the overall construct.

Table 4.4: Monitoring effective use of social media in the business

% of variance = 4.76		Cronbach alpha = 0.865		
Items	Statements	Factor loadings	Itm-Totl Correl.	Alpha if deleted
MON1	Requires that employees always disclose their identities	0.600	0.461	0.860
MON3	Can observe my social media activity	0.677	0.553	0.852
MON4	Adheres to local legal and ethical regulations when posting information	0.597	0.507	0.855
MON5	Does not allow employees to air frustrations or discontent	0.767	0.678	0.842
MON6	Has communicated the social media policy to all employees	0.651	0.557	0.851
MON7	Insists that employees clearly state whether posts are personal, or business related	0.734	0.641	0.844
MON8	Demands that comments on the business page be rectified and not deleted	0.663	0.580	0.849
MON9	Has an employee to overseas social media usage	0.778	0.708	0.839
MON10	Has disciplinary actions for misuse of social media	0.625	0.565	0.851
MON11	Demands approval from a senior staff member before placing a post	0.595	0.519	0.855

Eleven items (MON1-MON11) were originally developed to measure this construct, with ten items (MON1, MON3-MON11) (seen from Table 4.4) loaded onto this construct as intended. A total of ten valid items were thus retained, with factor loadings ranging between 0.595 to 0.778. This construct explained 4.76% of the variance found in the data. The factor loadings provided sufficient evidence thus the scale measuring this construct was valid. Furthermore, a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.865 was reported for this factor, which is greater than the 0.7 cut-off point. Therefore, the items measuring this construct are deemed highly reliable.

The section to follow will focus on the dependent variable of this study and will elaborate on the validity and reliability of the results pertaining to the benefits of social media in the business.

4.3.3 Dependent variable

Table 4.5 summarises the results of the EFA which extracted the items that loaded, as well as indicating the Cronbach's alpha (α) of each item and the overall construct.

Table 4.5: Validity and reliability for the social media benefits in the business variable

% of variance = 7.81		Cronbach alpha =0.909		
Item	Statement	Factor loading	Item-total correlation	Alpha if deleted
BEN1	Quicker task completion	0.600	0.573	0.903
BEN2	Improved internal communication amongst employees	0.674	0.643	0.900
BEN4	Swift recruitment of new employees through our network	0.680	0.635	0.901
BEN5	Being more competitive	0.714	0.692	0.899
BEN6	Improved teamwork	0.692	0.670	0.899
BEN7	Increased operating efficiency	0.669	0.642	0.900
BEN8	Increased employees' effectiveness	0.723	0.663	0.900
BEN9	Increased our customer/client base	0.713	0.653	0.900
BEN11	Increased retail knowledge	0.610	0.541	0.903
BEN12	Increased brand awareness	0.574	0.484	0.905
BEN13	Obtaining information of sales trends	0.562	0.469	0.905
BEN14	Effortless introduction to service providers and experts without in- person appointments	0.569	0.513	0.904
BEN15	Purchases by customers/clients not otherwise considered	0.650	0.550	0.903
BEN16	Increased our new product/service offerings	0.650	0.581	0.902
BEN17	Referrals through positive comments/reviews by customers/clients	0.520	0.426	0.907
BEN18	Visualisation of our products/service offerings for customers/clients	0.634	0.554	0.903
BEN21	Increased customer/client loyalty	0.628	0.530	0.904

For the purpose of the study, An EFA was undertaken to measure the validity of the dependent variable, namely *Social media benefits*. Social media benefits are influenced by issues relating to efficiency when it comes to the staff's task completion,

creating brand awareness, increased collaboration with other retailers and communication process being positively influenced.

Twenty-one items (BEN1-BEN21) were originally intended to measure the construct *Social media benefits* (See Table 4.6). However, 17 items (BEN1-BEN2, BEN4-BEN9, BEN11-BEN18 & BEN21) loaded onto this construct as intended. A minimum of 0.5 is the factor loadings for this construct, ranging between 0.520 and 0.723. Furthermore, a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.909 was reported for this factor, which is greater than the 0.7 cut-off point, indicating high reliability. Moreover, the construct explained 7.81% of the variance found in the data, indicating high item consistency; therefore, the factor loadings provided sufficient evidence that the scale measuring *Social media benefits* was valid.

The sections to follow will refer to the reliability and validity of the independent variables which formed part of this study.

4.3.4 Independent variables

The section to follow will focus on the Factor Matrix of the independent variables. The outcome of the factor structure for the intrinsic variables is found in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6: Factor matrix of the Independent Variables

ITEMS	INFO	MARK	EMPLE	CUSE
INFO1	0.847	0.225	0.095	0.230
INFO2	0.845	0.122	0.182	0.280
INFO3	0.602	0.224	0.303	0.060
INFO4	0.767	0.276	0.221	0.136
INFO5	0.744	0.319	0.095	0.191
MARK6	0.215	0.735	0.104	-0.074
MARK7	0.332	0.692	0.299	0.132
MARK8	0.388	0.693	0.044	0.119
MARK9	0.226	0.758	0.132	0.337
MARK10	0.156	0.592	0.070	0.471
MARK11	0.388	0.529	0.002	0.287
MARK12	0.102	0.615	0.205	0.209
MARK13	0.223	0.632	0.219	0.376
MARK14	0.290	0.421	0.164	0.179
EMPE15	0.093	0.139	0.827	0.112
EMPE16	0.171	0.061	0.865	0.148
EMPE17	0.183	0.201	0.763	0.348
EMPE18	0.140	0.200	0.525	0.145
EMPE19	0.329	0.134	0.569	0.254
CUSE20	0.169	0.156	0.236	0.709
CUSE21	0.240	0.392	0.322	0.608
CUSE22	0.319	0.145	0.306	0.709
CUSE23	0.142	0.209	0.162	0.852
CUSE24	0.197	0.118	-0.040	0.837
CUSE25	0.138	0.085	0.174	0.868
CUSE26	0.108	0.076	0.177	0.714
Expl.Var	4.089	4.344	3.388	5.169
Prp.Totl	0.157	0.167	0.130	0.199

A total of four usable factors were extracted from the EFA. The four constructs extracted were *information collection*; *marketing*; *employee engagement* and *customer engagement*. According to Osborne (2008:89) all together for a construct to be viewed as valid, at least three items are required to load onto the given construct. No cross-loadings occur. The section to follow will focus on the validity and reliability of the independent variables.

The first independent variable to be analysed is *Information collection*, which is elaborated on in the following section. `

4.3.4.1 Information collection

Table 4.7 summarises the results of the EFA which extracted the items that loaded, as well as indicating the Cronbach's alpha (α) of each item and the overall construct. In the section to follow, the validity and reliability of the independent variable *Information collection* will be tabulated and discussed.

Table 4.7: Validity and reliability of Information collection

Eigenvalue: 11.00		% of variance = 42.32		Cronbach alpha = 0.891	
Items	Statements	Factor loadings	Itm-Totl Correl.	Alpha if deleted	
INFO1	Get up-to-date information about market developments	0.847	0.810	0.839	
INFO2	Learn about new innovations in retailing	0.845	0.814	0.837	
INFO3	Empower employees to solve work-related problems	0.602	0.560	0.906	
INFO4	Track retail trends	0.767	0.745	0.853	
INFO5	Receive new advertising newsfeeds	0.744	0.727	0.857	

As a result of the EFA, it can be seen from Table 4.7 that all of the items originally intended to measure *Information collection* (INFO1-5) loaded as expected and met the 0.5 cut-off point. The factor loadings for the *Information collection* construct ranged from 0.602 to 0.847. *Information collection* had an Eigenvalue of more than 1 (11.00) and explained 42.32% of the variance in the data. The Cronbach alpha yielded 0.891, which indicated that the scale measuring this factor is highly reliable, as can be seen in Table 4.7. As a result of the factor analysis, the operationalisation of the factor *Information collection* remained unchanged in the context of this study and refers to empowering employees to solve work-related problems by receiving newsfeeds to learn and receive up-to-date market developments and new innovative trends.

The section to follow discusses the validity and reliability of *marketing* using social media platforms in the retail businesses.

4.3.4.2 Marketing

Table 4.8 summarises the results of the EFA which extracted the items that loaded, as well as indicating the Cronbach's alpha (α) of each item and the overall construct. In the section to follow, the validity and reliability of the independent variable *Marketing* will be tabulated and discussed.

Table 4.8: Validity and reliability of Marketing

Eigenvalue: 2.52		% of variance = 9.69		Cronbach alpha = 0.885	
Items	Statements	Factor loadings	Itm-Totl Correl.	Alpha if deleted	
MARK6	Catalogue products/services for advertising	0.735	0.566	0.877	
MARK7	Upload products/services images and descriptions	0.692	0.710	0.863	
MARK8	Advertise for free via share/like/recommend comments by our customers/clients	0.693	0.696	0.864	
MARK9	Drive more traffic to website	0.758	0.737	0.859	
MARK10	Send customers/clients our business website link to obtain information	0.592	0.652	0.868	
MARK11	Advertise to a specific group of customers/clients	0.529	0.602	0.875	
MARK12	Advertise all our products	0.615	0.563	0.877	
MARK13	Test new market ideas on customers/clients	0.632	0.700	0.863	

Nine items (MARK6-MARK14) were originally developed to measure this construct. Eight items (MARK6-MARK13) (seen from Table 4.8) loaded onto this construct as intended. A total of eight valid items were thus retained, with factor loadings ranging between 0.529 and 0.758. This construct had an Eigenvalue of more than 1 (2.52) and explained 9.69% of the variance in the data. Furthermore, a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.885 was reported for this factor, which is greater than the 0.7 cut-off point. Therefore, the items measuring this construct are deemed highly reliable. As a result of the factor analysis, the operationalisation of the factor *Marketing* remains unchanged with only one item (MARK14) being eliminated. *Marketing* refers to marketing products and services to attract customers to purchase the business offerings by advertising to target customers to drive customer traffic to the business and assist in more business to business interaction.

An additional determining variable for social media is employee engagement, which refers to how social media serves as a linking tool between staff within the business. This concept is elaborated in the following section.

4.3.4.3 Employee engagement

Table 4.9 summarises the results of the EFA which extracted the items that loaded, as well as indicating the Cronbach's alpha (α) of each item and the overall construct. In the section to follow, the validity and reliability of the independent variable *Employee engagement* will be tabulated and discussed.

Table 4.9: Validity and reliability of Employee engagement

Eigenvalue: 1.98		% of variance = 7.62		Cronbach alpha = 0.848	
Items	Statements	Factor loadings	Item-Totl Correl.	Alpha if deleted	
EMPE15	Connect with co-workers about work issues	0.827	0.706	0.801	
EMPE16	Liaise with management about problems experienced	0.865	0.762	0.786	
EMPE17	Interact with the workgroup about urgent business matters	0.763	0.791	0.781	
EMPE18	Post job listings to recruit employees	0.525	0.469	0.862	
EMPE19	Share newsletters with employees	0.569	0.572	0.838	

As a result of the exploratory factor analysis, it can be seen from Table 4.9 that all the items originally intended to measure *Employee engagement* (EMPE15-19) loaded as expected and met the 0.5 cut-off point. The factor loadings for *Employee engagement* construct ranged from 0.525 to 0.865. This construct had an Eigenvalue of more than 1 (1.98) and explained 7.62% of the variance in the data. The Cronbach alpha yielded 0.848, which indicated that the scale measuring this factor is highly reliable, as can be seen in Table 4.9. As a result of the factor analysis, the operationalisation of the factor *Employee engagement* remained unchanged in the context of this study and refers to colleagues and management using social media to express concerns and other business matters freely and refers to potential staff, relating to the way in which the business uses social media to communicate and recruit potential candidates.

The section to follow discusses the validity and reliability of *marketing* using social media platforms in the retail businesses.

4.3.4.4 Customer engagement

Table 4.10 summarises the results of the EFA which extracted the items that loaded, as well as indicating the Cronbach's alpha (α) of each item and the overall construct. In the section to follow, the validity and reliability of *Customer engagement* will be tabulated and discussed.

Table 4.10: Validity and reliability of Customer engagement

Eigenvalue: 1.49		% of variance = 5.72		Cronbach alpha = 0.921	
Items	Statements	Factor loadings	Item-Totl Correl.	Alpha if deleted	
CUSE20	Engage with new customers/clients about products/services	0.709	0.728	0.909	
CUSE21	Send promotion details to existing customers/clients	0.608	0.691	0.912	
CUSE22	Reconnect with customers/clients after a service complaints/breakdown	0.709	0.778	0.904	
CUSE23	Engage with customers/clients about products/services changes	0.852	0.867	0.894	
CUSE24	Obtain feedback from customers/clients about new ideas	0.837	0.751	0.906	
CUSE25	Obtain feedback from customers/clients about current products/services	0.868	0.828	0.897	
CUSE26	Spark conversations between customers/clients	0.714	0.635	0.920	

As a result of the exploratory factor analysis, it can be seen from Table 4.10 that all the items originally intended to measure *Customer engagement* (CUSE20-26) loaded as expected and met the 0.5 cut-off point. The factor loadings for *Customer engagement* construct ranged from 0.608 to 0.868. This construct had an Eigenvalue of more than 1 (1.49) and explained 5.72% of the variance in the data. The Cronbach alpha yielded 0.921, which indicated that the scale measuring this factor is highly reliable, as can be seen in Table 4.10. As a result of the factor analysis, the operationalisation of the factor *Customer engagement* remained unchanged and refers to retailers using social media to engage with customers, existing or new, daily to ensure a level of customer relationship and to manage and maintain it in order to attain customer loyalty by staff. The engagement with customers involves feedback from customers in order to allow retailers to satisfy customer needs.

In the section to follow the empirical results of the descriptive statistics will be presented.

4.4 EMPIRICAL RESULTS OF THE DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

The empirical results of the descriptive statistics will be presented in the following section.

4.4.1 Descriptive statistics

In the section to follow the descriptive statistics will be presented. This will include a discussion on the devices to access social media platforms, followed by the statistics for frequency of social media platform usage for personal related issues and work-related issues concluded by discussing the descriptive statistics of the dependent and independent variables along with the descriptive statistics for drawbacks and monitoring effective use of social media in the business.

4.4.1.1 Devices and frequency used to access social media platforms

The following table identifies the technological devices and frequency used by the respondents in order to access social media platforms in the retail sector.

Table 4.11: Devices to access social media platforms

To access social media platforms, I use	Always	Usually	Occasionally	Seldom	Never
	Percentage				
Desktop	27	10	16	12	35
Laptop	18	11	25	12	34
Smartphone	73	11	10	2	4
Tablet/iPad	15	14	14	8	49

It is evident from Table 4.11 that the social media device always used to access social media platforms is Smartphone's (73%), followed by desktops (27%), laptops (18%) and Tablets/iPads (15%). Furthermore, the device that reported the highest use occasionally is laptops (25%), followed by desktop (16%), Tablet/iPad (14%) and

Smartphone (10%). Moreover, the device reported with the least use is Tablet/iPads (49%), followed by desktop (35%), laptop (34%) and Smartphone (4%). This point to Smartphone's being the most used device for accessing social media platforms.

In the section to follow the statistics for the frequency of social media usage for personal-related issues will be discussed.

4.4.1.2 The frequency of social media usage for personal-related issues

The respondents were asked to state how frequently they use social media in the business for issues of a personal nature. As a result, the following table has been compiled and the results were tabulated accordingly.

Table 4.12: Social media platform used for personal issues

Social media platform used for personal issues	Always	Usually	Occasionally	Seldom	Never
	Percentage				
Facebook	45	16	16	13	10
Twitter	28	5	15	11	41
Instagram	23	16	16	11	34
Pinterest	17	8	11	8	56
LinkedIn	8	7	14	14	57

It is noted from Table 4.12 that the most frequent social media platform always used to access social media platforms for personal-related issues is Facebook (45%), followed by Twitter (28%), Instagram (23%), Pinterest (17%) and lastly LinkedIn (8%). Some respondents reported that occasionally they use Facebook (16%) and Instagram (16%) the most, followed by Twitter (15%), LinkedIn (14%) and lastly Pinterest (11%). Furthermore, 57% of respondents said that they never use LinkedIn for personal-related issues, followed by Pinterest (56%), Twitter (41%), Instagram (34%) and lastly Facebook (10%). Thus, this point towards Facebook as the most frequently accessed social media platform for personal-related issues.

In the section to follow the statistics for *Social media platform used for work related issues* will be further discussed.

4.4.1.3 Social media platform used for work related issues

The respondents were asked to state how frequently they use social media for issues of a work-related nature. As a result, the following table has been compiled and the results were tabulated accordingly

Table 4.13: Social media platform used for work related issues

Social media platform used for work related issues	Always	Usually	Occasionally	Seldom	Never
	Percentage				
Facebook	30	12	18	14	26
Twitter	12	2	11	13	62
Instagram	18	5	12	9	56
Pinterest	14	2	9	5	70
LinkedIn	7	10	13	13	57

It is observed from Table 4.13 that 30% of respondents always use Facebook for work related issues, followed by Instagram (18%), Pinterest (14%), Twitter (12%) and lastly LinkedIn (7%). Furthermore, 70% of respondents reported that they never use Pinterest for work related issues, followed by Twitter (62%), LinkedIn (57%), Instagram (56%) and lastly Facebook (26%). Thus, this point toward Facebook being the most frequently used social media platform for work-related issues.

In the section to follow the descriptive statistics of the independent and dependent variables will be discussed in further detail.

4.4.2 Descriptive statistics of independent and dependent variables

The descriptive statistics for the independent and dependent variables are summarised in Table 4.14.

Table 4.14: Descriptive statistics of independent and dependent variables

Variable	Mean	Std.Dev.
Information collection	4.040	0.806
Marketing	4.052	0.765
Employee engagement	3.545	1.001
Customer engagement	4.095	0.814
Benefits of social media	4.101	0.562

As can be seen from in Table 4.14, all the independent variables had mean scores of 3.5 and above, indicating that the respondents agreed that these constructs are used by retailers when accessing social media platforms. However, on average, the construct *Employee engagement* had the lowest mean score of 3.545 while the construct *Customer engagement* having the highest mean score of 4.095. Thus, respondents agree that their retail business use social media platforms for *Customer engagement*. In addition, the standard deviation for majority of the independent variables was relatively low (less than one), signifying that there was not a lot of dispersion between the answers relating to these constructs. However, *Employee engagement* returned a standard deviation of 1.001; indicating that there was some variation around the mean score returned.

Furthermore, as is evident in Table 4.14, the dependent variable *Benefits of social media* had a mean score of 4.101. This indicates that, on average, the respondents agree with the perceived benefits of using social media platforms for their retail business. The standard deviation for the dependent variable *Benefits of social media* was relatively low (less than one), signifying that there was not a lot of dispersion between the answers relating to this construct.

In the section to follow the descriptive statistics for the drawbacks of using social media in the business will be discussed, followed by the descriptive statistics for monitoring the effective use of social media in the business.

4.4.3 The descriptive statistics related to the drawbacks of using social media in the business

In the following section the descriptive statistics related to the *drawbacks of using social media in the business* will be further discussed.

Table 4.15: Drawbacks of using social media in the business

Drawback Statement	Agree	Undecided	Disagree
Social media in the business has resulted in:	Percentage		
Loosing work-time due to using it for personal communication	67	16	17
Negative online publicity been spread	52	30	18
Posting of negative online comments by an employee	40	27	33
Sharing negative feelings to clients online	33	32	35
Poor work quality due to too much time online for personal reasons	57	20	23
Work reputation being tarnished through customers/clients' online postings	46	29	25
Personal relationships between employee and customer/client	56	23	21
Personal relationships between colleagues	58	16	26
Employees claiming online information as their own	39	28	33
Increased stress levels due to higher work expectations	47	30	23
Managers intimidating employees	38	17	45
The business being exposed to malware or viruses	49	26	25
Loss of customers due to negative comments	46	31	23
Increased expenses due to excessive use of data	53	20	27
Leakage of confidential business information	30	31	39
Business reputation being tarnished due to customers/clients' negative comments/reviews	38	28	34
Loosing valuable staff headhunted by other retailers	46	22	32
Mean	3.273		
Standard deviation	0.779		

As can be seen from in Table 4.15, 67% of the respondents agreed that the use of social media for personal communication will result in loss of work-time. Furthermore, 58% and 56% of the respondents agreed that the use of social media within the business has resulted in personal relationships with colleagues and personal relationships with employee and customer/client respectively. In addition, 57% of

respondents agreed that using social media within the business has resulted in poor work quality due to too much time online for personal reasons.

However, only 30% of respondents agreed that using social media platforms results in confidential business information being leaked. In addition, 33% of the respondents agreed that the use of social media within the business has resulted in the sharing of negative feelings to clients online.

Furthermore, 32 % of respondents were uncertain about whether social media platforms are being used to share negative feelings to clients online. Moreover, 31% of respondents were uncertain about whether using social media platforms within the business has resulted in the loss of customers due to negative comments and leakage of confidential business information. However, only 16% of respondents were uncertain about whether using social media platforms for personal communication will result in loss of work-time and personal relationships between colleagues. Additionally, only 17% of the respondents were uncertain about whether using social media within the business resulted in managers intimidating employees.

As can be seen in Table 4.15, 45% of respondents disagree that managers use social media platforms to intimidate employees, whereas 39% of the respondents disagreed that the use of social media within the business has resulted in the leakage of confidential business information. Moreover, 35% of the respondents disagreed that social media within the business has resulted in the sharing of negative feelings to clients online. However, only 17% and 18% of the respondents disagreed that the use of social media platforms for personal communication results in loss of work-time and negative online publicity been spread respectively.

Furthermore, as is evident from table 4.15, *Drawbacks of using social media in the business* returned an overall mean score of 3.273 (tending towards 3 on the rating scale), indicating that respondents on average tend to be uncertain about whether the use of social media posed a risk for the retailers. Therefore, respondents were not sure if using social media was a risk for retailers losing work time or quality of work. Moreover, respondents weren't sure if negative online publicity could affect the brand and loyalty of staff due to social media in the business being an added expense and if

abused could pose a threat to the business. *Drawbacks of using social media in the business* returned a standard deviation of 0.779, indicating that the responses were similar.

In the following section the descriptive statistics related to *Monitoring effective use of social media in the business* will be discussed.

4.4.4 The descriptive statistics related to the use of social media in the business.

In the following section the descriptive statistics related to the *Social media in the business* will be further discussed.

Table 4.16: Monitoring effective use of social media in the business

Statements To monitor the effective use of social media my business:	Agree	Undecided	Disagree
	Percentage		
Requires that employees always disclose their identities	52	20	28
Has access to my social media pages	40	19	41
Can observe my social media activity	47	17	36
Adheres to local legal and ethical regulations when posting information	66	19	15
Does not allow employees to air frustrations or discontent	62	16	22
Has communicated the social media policy to all employees	70	15	15
Insists that employees clearly state whether posts are personal, or business related	61	17	23
Demands that comments on the business page be rectified and not deleted	53	22	25
Has an employee to overseas social media usage	58	20	22
Has disciplinary actions for misuse of social media	66	14	20
Demands approval from a senior staff member before placing a post	43	18	39
Mean	3.434		
Standard deviation	1.235		

As can be seen from in Table 4.16, 70% of the respondents agreed that when monitoring the effective use of social media their business has communicated the social media policy to all employees. Furthermore, 66% of the respondents agreed that the business has disciplinary actions for misuse of social media and adheres to local, legal and ethical regulations when posting information. However, only 40% of respondents agreed that the business has access to employee's social media pages. Moreover, 43% and 47% of the respondents agreed that the business demands approval from a senior staff member before placing a post and can observe employee's social media activity.

Furthermore, 22% of respondents were uncertain that there were demands that comments on the business page be rectified and not deleted. Moreover, 20% of the respondents were uncertain that their business requires employees to always disclose their identities and has an employee to oversee social media usage. However, only 15% of respondents were uncertain about whether the business has communicated the social media policy to all employee's while 16% of the respondents were uncertain about whether they can air their frustrations or discontent.

Moreover, 41% of respondents disagree that their business has access to employee's social media pages, whereas 39% of the respondents disagreed that the business demands the approval from a senior staff member before placing a post. Additionally, only 15% of respondents disagreed that their business adheres to local, legal and ethical regulations when posting information. In addition, 15% of respondents disagreed that their business communicated the social media policy to all employees.

Furthermore, as is evident from Table 4.16, *Monitoring effective use of social media in the business* returned an overall means score of 3.434 (tending towards 3 on the rating scale), indicating that respondents on average tend to be uncertain about whether the business monitored the effective use of social media. In addition, *Monitoring the effective use of social media in the business* returned a standard deviation of 1.235, signifying that there is a lot of dispersion amongst the agreeableness to the statements.

In the section to follow the empirical results of the inferential statistics will be presented.

4.5 EMPIRICAL RESULTS OF THE INFERENTIAL STATISTICS

There are numerous approaches to inferential statistics such as Pearson's product moment correlation coefficient, Multi-collinearity and multiple regression analysis, which will be briefly discussed in the sections to follow.

4.5.1 Pearson product moment correlation coefficients

In order to determine the correlation between the dependant variable (*Benefits of social media*) and the independent variables (*Information collection, Marketing, Employee engagement and Customer engagement*), a Pearson product moment correlation was undertaken.

Choudhury (2009) lists the following guidelines for assessing the strength of correlations:

- -1.0 to -0.5 reflects a strong inverse correlation;
- -0.5 to -0.3 reflects a moderate inverse correlation;
- -0.3 to -0.1 reflects a weak inverse correlation;
- -0.1 to +0.1 reflects a very weak inverse correlation;
- +0.1 to +0.3 reflects a weak direct correlation;
- +0.3 to +0.5 reflects a moderate direct correlation; and
- +0.5 to +1.0 reflects a strong direct correlation.

The correlations between the different variable under investigation in this study, are presented in Table 4.17.

Table 4.17: Pearson's moment correlation coefficients

	BEN	INFO	MARK	EMPE	CUSE
Benefits of social media	1.000				
Information collection	0.378	1.000			
Marketing	0.319	0.635	1.000		

Employee engagement	0.433	0.503	0.470	1.000	
Customer engagement	0.480	0.481	0.566	0.493	1.000

From Table 4.17 the *benefits of social media* reported moderate direct correlations with *Information collection* ($r = 0.378$), *Marketing* ($r = 0.319$), *Employee engagement* ($r = 0.433$) and *Customer engagement* ($r = 0.480$). Furthermore, *Information collection* reported strong direct correlations with *Marketing* ($r = 0.635$) and *Employee engagement* ($r = 0.503$); and a moderate direct correlation with *Customer engagement* ($r = 0.481$). A strong direct relationship exists between *Information collection*, *Marketing* and *Employee engagement*, because by keeping up-to-date with information about market developments, empowering employees to solve problems and receiving new advertising newsfeeds the retail business can advertise products/services, drive traffic, test new market ideas and network with other retailers. Furthermore, this leads to the retail business being able to engage and connect with colleagues, *laisse* with management about problems, share newsletters with employees as well as recruit employees. Moreover, *Marketing* reported a moderate direct correlation with *Employee engagement* ($r = 0.470$); and strong direct correlation with *Customer engagement* ($r = 0.566$). Lastly, *Employee engagement* reported a moderate direct correlation with *Customer engagement* ($r = 0.493$).

In the section to follow the data related to Multi-collinearity will be looked at in detail.

4.5.2 Multi-Collinearity

If the tolerance value is less than 0.1 and, simultaneously, the value of VIF are 10 and above, then the multicollinearity is problematic (Statistics Solutions, 2018:1). Table 4.18 shows the results of the multi-collinearity of the independent variables.

Table 4.18: Multi-collinearity of independent variables

Factor	R ²	Tolerance value	VIF
Info	0.447	0.553	1.808
Mark	0.482	0.518	1.931
EMPE	0.323	0.677	1.477
CUSE	0.375	0.625	1.600

As is evident in Table 4.18 all independent variables had tolerance values above 0.1 and VIFs less than 10, suggesting that the independent variables were free from collinearity and that multiple regression analysis can be performed.

In the section to follow the correlations will be further explored by testing Multi-collinearity.

4.5.3 Multiple regression analysis

The findings of the multiple regression analysis are presented in Table 4.19. The following table discusses multiple regressions analysing the R-square variable, including Beta, T-values, as well as P-values of the independent variables. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003:142), when a t-value of a factor is less than 1.96 at a significance level of 0.05 or between 1.96 and 3.09 at a significance level of 0.001, the hypothesis is then rejected. Furthermore, relationships at the 5% ($p < 0.05$) levels were considered significant and are reported.

Table 4.19: Multiple regression

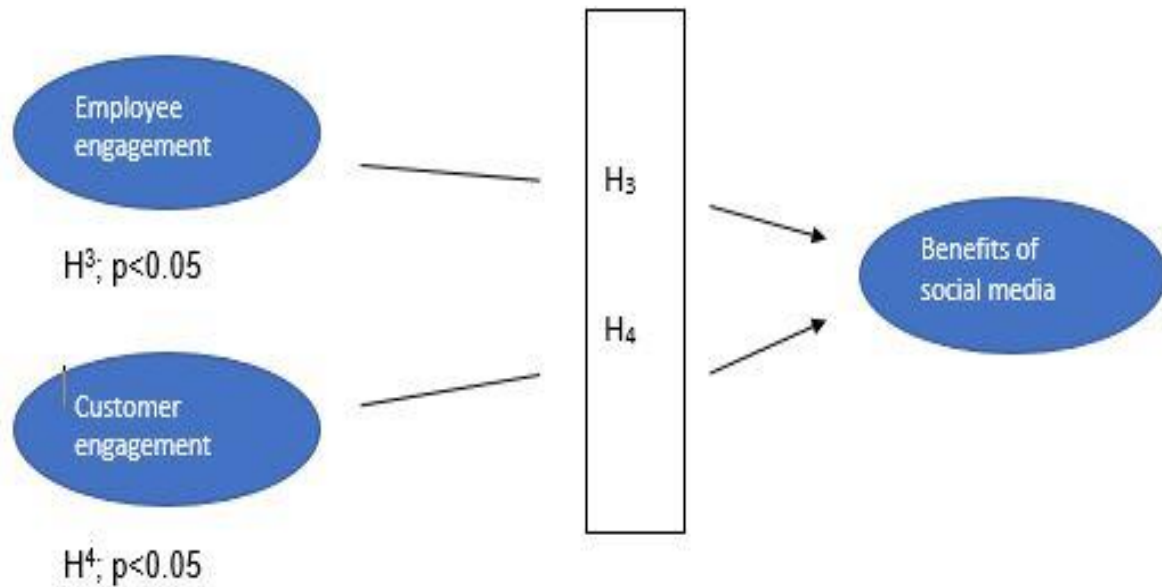
Dependent variable: Benefits of social media				R- square = 0.263	
Independent variables	Beta	T value	Sig p-value	Hypothesis number	Hypothesis
Information collection	0.147	1.257	0.212	H ₁	Rejected
Marketing	-0.072	-0.597	0.552	H ₂	Rejected
Employee engagement	0.226	2.131	0.036*	H ₃	Accepted
Customer engagement	0.338	3.068	0.003*	H ₄	Accepted

* $p < 0.05$

From Table 4.19, it is clear that about 26% of the variance in *Benefits of social media* can be explained by the variances in the independent factors. There are no statistically significant relationships found between the independent variables (*Information collection* and *Marketing*) and *Benefits of social media* (dependent variable). Evidence of statistical significance relationships were found (at $p < 0.05$) between the independent variables (*employee engagement* and *customer engagement*) and benefits of social media (dependent variable). The T values of these statistically significant relationships below $p > 1.96$ at $p < 0.05$ significance level. Therefore,

hypothesis H_3 and H_4 are accepted. These significant relationships are presented in Figure 4.1.

Figure 4.1: Summary of revised hypothesised model



As mentioned, the primary objective of this study was to investigate the benefits of using social media in the retail sector in the Nelson Mandela Bay region of the Eastern Cape. Based on the statistical analyses conducted, the primary objective of this study was achieved. As a result of the multiple regression analysis, the first two initial hypothesis were rejected (H^1 and H^2), while the last two hypotheses were accepted (H^3 and H^4).

4.6 SUMMARY

In Chapter Four, the empirical results of the study were presented. Firstly, a summary of the general demographic information pertaining to 101 respondents was presented in a table format, followed by a discussion of the demographic information. Thereafter, the validity and the reliability of the measuring instruments were presented. Content validity was used to assess the validity of the constructs, while Cronbach-alpha coefficients were used to test the reliability of the measuring instrument. As a result of

the validity and reliability assessment, there was no need to rename any constructs, theoretical framework or hypothesis relationships.

The results of the descriptive and inferential statistical analysis were then examined. These results were obtained from the descriptive and frequency analysis, Pearson's product moment correlations, multi-collinearity and the multiple regression analysis. The descriptive statistics revealed that *Customer engagement* was the highest level of agreement (4.095) regarding using social media platforms to engage with their customers. *Employee engagement*, although still likely to agree reflects the lowest level of agreement (3.545). Furthermore, respondents agreed (4.101) that small retail businesses can benefit from using social media. *Drawbacks of using social media in the business* returned an overall mean score of 3.273, indicating that respondents on average tend to be uncertain about whether the use of social media posed a drawback for retailers. *Monitoring effective use of social media in the business* returned an overall means score of 3.434, indicating that respondents on average tend to be uncertain about whether the business monitored the effective use of social media. Moreover, the device always used to access social media platforms was Smartphone's (73%). Additionally, the device reported with the least use is Tablet/iPads (49%). Furthermore, the most frequent social media platform always used to access social media platforms for personal-related issues is Facebook (45%), while the least frequent social media platform never used is LinkedIn for personal-related issues. On the other hand, the most frequent social media platform always used to access social media platforms for work-related issues is Facebook (30%), while the least frequent social media platform never used for work-related problems is Pinterest (70%).

Furthermore, Pearson's product moment correlations revealed that the strongest relationship was between two independent variables, namely *Information collection* and *Marketing*. The weakest correlation observed was between *Marketing* and *Benefits of social media*. The multi-collinearity revealed that the tolerance values are greater than 0.1 and the VIF values are less than 10 which meant that all criteria were free from collinearity and that a multiple regression analysis could be done. The multiple regression analysis revealed that *Employee engagement* and *Customer engagement* are the only independent variables that are significant at a level of ($p = <0.5$) that influences *Benefits of social media*.

In the final chapter, Chapter Five, the entire study will be summarised, providing an overview of the various chapters. The main findings obtained from the literature review, as well as the findings of the empirical investigation will be presented and interpreted, and various recommendations for businesses in the retail sector will be presented. Furthermore, the drawbacks encountered throughout the study will be highlighted, followed by a discussion on the contributions of the study. Lastly, recommendations for future research will be presented.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The final chapter will consist of a summary of the study, followed by a discussion of the significant findings of the literature, as well as the empirical results, and its interpretation of the influence of social media within the retail sector. Thereafter, conclusions and recommendations will follow, based on the relevant findings of the study. Lastly, the contributions by the researchers to this study, as well as suggestions for future research, will conclude this chapter as well as the study.

5.2 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

Chapter One contained an introduction and background to the study, followed by a problem statement and the primary and secondary objectives of this research project. As per Chapter One, the primary objectives of this study were to investigate the benefits of using social media in the retail sector in the Nelson Mandela Bay region.

In order to achieve the primary objective of this study, the following secondary objectives were formulated:

- SO¹ To establish the devices used to access popular social media platforms and the frequency thereof;
- SO² To investigate the frequency of social media usage for personal and work-related issues;
- SO³ To determine what social media is used for by retailers;
- SO⁴ To explore the benefits of utilising social media for retailing;
- SO⁵ To determine whether social media usage is beneficial for retailers;
- SO⁶ To determine the drawbacks associated with social media use by retailers;

SO⁷ To establish what should be included in the social media policy for effective motoring and governance.

In Chapter Two, a literature review was presented on a theoretical base for the research by highlighting the relevance of social media to the retail sector – with specific reference to the retail sector – depicting which social media platforms can be used for analysing positive and negative outcomes for using social media. For the purpose of this study, retailing was defined as the process of getting a product to the end-user, offering consumers the opportunity to shop for the desired goods and services offered by the retailer (Amadeo, 2018; Kotler & Keller, 2016:550). It has been found that social media makes quite a significant contribution to the retail sector.

Social media serves a number of various functions for retailers; however, its primary role is to serve as an efficient form of communication for personal and work-related issues. Moreover, it is defined as a means of social interaction through media sources and platforms, accessed by making use of web-based technologies (Taprial & Kanwar, 2012:8).

According to the literature findings, the importance of social media to the retail sector depends greatly on the benefits which social media offers the retail sector, some of which are in the interest of customers to *engage and build relationships; communicate effectively beyond email and phone; provide businesses with trends and analysis; foster self-development, learning and discovery; and create an organisational culture* (Lacho, 2010:129). Social media is said to also add value to the general operations of a retail sector.

There are several social media platforms used by retailers to achieve target-specific goals. The literature study focused on the five best and most used platforms, namely Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest and LinkedIn (McLeod, 2017). The findings stipulate that these social media platforms are used by retailers to drive traffic to the business, advertise or market the business, to have better retail sector communication and ultimately building sustainable relationships with customers. As a result, the uses lead to benefits such as an increase in sales and brand awareness of the business

which results to brand loyalty. On the other hand, Pinterest and LinkedIn offer additional uses such as the ability to use social media as a cost-effective recruitment tool to help find interested candidates with the required skills (Sogbaike, 2017; Witzig *et al.*, 2012:119).

A social network can serve as a supportive tool for the development of the retail sector by means of problem solving which relates to the effectiveness and efficiency of the overall retail sector tasks (Xerri & Brunetto, 2011:2-5). According to the literature study, some areas which contribute to the value of the general retailer, is *marketing, information collection, customer engagement* and *employee engagement* (Kiron, Palmer, Phillips & Krushwitz, 2012; Business Queensland, 2016; Gaille, 2015 ; Parry & Solidoro, 2013:121), however these positive aspects of social media needs to be monitored accordingly. Because social media tends to distract employees when working in the retail sector (Nyaribo, 2013:142), a means to manage the misuse of social media is required in the retail sector. As a result, internet policies are implemented to respond to these concerns. On the other hand, however, the concept of social media policies is fairly new and undeveloped, and in turn may not be as effective as it should be (Nyaribo, 2013:142).

The main purpose of Chapter Three was to describe the research paradigm and methodology that was used in order to address the primary and secondary objectives in order to obtain the empirical findings which were identified in Chapter Four. For the purpose of the study, a positivistic research paradigm was adopted, as well as an interpretivistic research paradigm to serve as a response to the positivism. In addition, a quantitative research methodology was undertaken in order to statistically justify and interpret the empirical findings of the relatively large sample. Statistical techniques were used in order to collect and analyse the data accordingly, and due to the testing of hypothesised relationships of the dependent and independent variables, the positivistic paradigm was further required. For the purpose of this study, non-probability sampling technique known as convenience sampling was used in order to conduct the research due to the geographic size of the Nelson Mandela Bay and ease of access to finding retail-orientated employees as respondents. In total 130 questionnaires were distributed, resulting to 101 useable questionnaires – therefore an effective response rate achieved. The items intended to measure the dependent

and independent variables were developed from secondary sources from previous studies. Chapter Three concluded with an overview of the statistical techniques which were used in order to analyse the data collected.

In Chapter 4 the empirical results of the study were presented. Chapter 4 contributed to the achievement of the fifth secondary objective of this study. To confirm the validity and reliability of the measuring instrument used in the study, an EFA was conducted. As a result of the EFA, no operationalisation definitions were adapted, and no additional variables were extracted. Factor loadings of 0.5 or more were considered for establishing the validity of the measuring instrument. Furthermore, the variables were considered for further statistical analyses. Cronbach's alpha coefficients were calculated for each factor that emerged from the EFA to determine internal item consistency. This was done to test the reliability of the measuring instruments. The Cronbach's alpha coefficients of greater than 0.70 were reported for all of the factors, indicating reliability of the measuring scales used in the study.

Moreover, the device always used to access social media platforms was Smartphone's (73%). Additionally, the device reported with the least use is Tablet/iPads (49%). This point to Smartphone's being the most used device for accessing social media platforms. Furthermore, the most frequent social media platform always used to access social media platforms for personal-related issues is Facebook (45%), while the least frequent social media platform never used is LinkedIn for personal-related issues. On the other hand, the most frequent social media platform always used to access social media platforms for work-related issues is Facebook (30%), while the least frequent social media platform never used for work-related problems is Pinterest (70%). Thus, this point toward Facebook being the most frequently used social media platform for work-related issues.

Furthermore, descriptive statistics were calculated, and *Customer engagement* was the highest level of agreement (4.095) regarding using social media platforms to engage with their customers. *Employee engagement*, although still likely to agree reflects the lowest level of agreement (3.545). Furthermore, respondents agreed (4.101) that small retail businesses can benefit from using social media. In addition, 67% of the respondents agreed that the use of social media for personal

communication will result in loss of work-time, while 45% of respondents disagreed that managers use social media platforms to intimidate employees. *Drawbacks of using social media in the business* returned an overall mean score of 3.273, indicating that respondents on average tend to be uncertain about whether the use of social media posed a drawback for retailers. Furthermore, 70% of the respondents agreed that when monitoring the effective use of social media their business has communicated the social media policy to all employees, while 41% of respondents disagree that their business has access to employee's social media pages. *Monitoring effective use of social media in the business* returned an overall means score of 3.434, indicating that respondents on average tend to be uncertain about whether the business monitored the effective use of social media

Moreover, Pearson's Product Moment Correlations were calculated to determine correlations among variables used in this study. All the independent variables (*Information collection*, *Marketing*, *Customer engagement* and *Employee engagement*) reported moderate direct correlations with the dependent variable *Benefits of social media*. Furthermore, Multicollinearity was calculated to determine if the variables were free from collinearity. All the independent variables had tolerance values of above 0.1 (ranging from 0.323 to 0.482) and VIFs less than 10 (ranging from 1.477 to 1.931). This suggests that the independent variables were free from collinearity and that multiple regression analyses could be performed. Thereafter a multiple regression analyses could be conducted to determine between the various independent variables (*Information collection*, *Marketing*, *Employee engagement* and *Customer engagement*) and the dependent variable (*Benefits of social media*). Furthermore, relationships at the 5 percent ($p < 0.05$) levels were considered significant and were reported. Statistically significant relationships between the independent variables (*Employee engagement* and *Customer engagement*) and the dependent variable (*Benefits of social media*) were found and yielded results of $p = 0.036$ and 0.003 respectively.

5.3 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In the following section, conclusions and recommendations will be made in regard to small businesses, as well as stating the significant and insignificant relationships based on the multiple regression statistics.

5.3.1 Statistically significant relationships

In order to find the factors which are relative to this study which form a positive influence within the retail sector in the Nelson Mandela Bay, statistically significant relationships were identified as *employee engagement* and *customer engagement*.

5.3.1.1 Employee engagement

As a result of the multiple regression analyses performed in Chapter Four, the relationship between *employee engagement and the benefits of social media in the retail sector* was found to be a statistically significant relationship, which means that retailers benefit when using social media for *employee engagement* (MindTools, 2017). In other words, the employees in the retail sector believed frequent work-related interaction between colleagues on work issues on urgent or every-day work issues is beneficial for the business. According to Charoensukmongkol (2014:341), there is benefits accruing when employees liaise with management about work related problems via social media platforms. As per Chapter Four, it seems that social media can be utilised as a tool to assist in the human resource tasks of businesses in the retail sector, to assists in the communication between employees and managers, as well as between employees and their colleagues (Parry & Solidoro, 2013;121).

The empirical results confirm that retailers use LinkedIn as a social media platform to find potentially new staff members. The recruitment process benefits the retailer as it is cost effective and an efficient approach to recruit new employees (Broughton *et al.*, 2013:20-21).

It is recommended that retailers:

- Make use of Twitter in order to share the retailer's employee-vacancy information by taking advantage of the platforms' ease of use and efficiency of being quickly accessible in any location, at any time;
- Use LinkedIn to save costs as a first recruitment option when searching for skilled candidates using 'LinkedIn's Advance Search' feature, which assists recruiters in finding suitable candidates for vacant job openings, as well as serve as a platform for working professionals to connect with other LinkedIn users;
- Use 'Workplace by Facebook' which is a collaborative social media platform which can be used internally to stimulate direct discussions between staff members to assist one another in task completion, problem solving and to improve the dispersion of knowledge by engaging with one another;
- Request staff to use Twitter and LinkedIn as a platform for staff members to communicate and to share any forms of positive feedback about their working environment to assist in having a corporate culture.

5.3.1.2 Customer engagement

It appears the study found that a statistically significant relationship exists between *customer engagement* and *the benefits of social media within the retail sector*, implying that retailers benefit when using social media in communicating with customers. By engaging in communication with existing as well as new customers, retailers are able to create awareness not only around new products or services, but also around product changes and promotional executions (Hovde, 2014 ; Mariscal, 2017 ; Long, 2017). Moreover, customer engagement is beneficial for both the customer and the business due to the fact that small retailers have the opportunity to receive feedback and reviews from both satisfied and dissatisfied customers (Hubert, 2016), and that the majority of customers believe fast problem resolution of the is vital to good service (Zendesk, 2018) – which means that engaging correctly with the customer, satisfies the customer's expectations. In addition, retailers are also exposed to more opportunity to drive more online traffic when social media platforms are used

by customers to download content relating to the retail business, as it tends to spark conversation between the active users, namely customers (Harr, 2016).

It seems that customer engagement via social media is regarded as a convenient way of direct communication with the customer which brings upon a personal and more genuine relationship between the retailer and the customer. In addition, it is very likely for retailers to receive not only positive feedback from customers, but also negative feedback – which if resolved promptly and fairly, could lead to retaining customers (Hubert, 2016).

It is recommended that retailers:

- Pay close attention to the customers and build a personal relationship by sharing information using messaging and uploads via social media platforms such as Twitter and Facebook;
- Make use of Facebook in order to attract a larger demographic of potential customers, as Facebook contains a world-wide market and the 'search' feature on Facebook filters the searches based on the specified criteria of the retailer;
- Communicate with customers via Twitter on a regular basis in order to maintain a relationship as Twitter tends to generate a level of brand loyalty among customers and ultimately contributes to repeat purchase behaviour;
- Use Facebook and Twitter to keep customers up to date with the latest business updates and developments such as new product launches, product or service changes and promotional activity;
- Ensure that the online Instagram, Twitter and Facebook relationships are customised and based on the customers' interests and background, in order to form a relationship with the customer to have the customer feel a sense of belonging to the retail business;
- Use social media platforms such as LinkedIn, Twitter, Pinterest, Instagram and Facebook to enhance innovation by creating a virtual environment for customers to share new ideas and to improve on the existing product offerings in order to remain in touch with direct competitors in the retail sector;
- Allocate a well-suited staff member to be assigned the duty or task of liaising with customers directly and regularly via the specified platform such as Twitter

or Facebook, in order for staff to achieve a more of a personal connection with the customers to ensure repeat purchase;

- Use Facebook in order to receive positive feedback and reviews from customers which could encourage staff to put more focus on customer satisfaction;
- Use Facebook in order to received feedback and reviews from dissatisfied customers, as this type of communication serves as constructive criticism for the retailer and ultimately beneficial for both the customers and the business;
- Use Twitter to directly contact all customers, business partners, as well as any other stakeholder of the retail business, as the Twitter platform allows customers to distribute all text-content and the option for all users to be in direct contact.

5.3.2 Statistically Insignificant relationships

In the aim of finding statistically relative relationships between the independent variables and the dependent variables of this study, it was too found that statistically insignificant relationships exist between *Information collection* and *Marketing*, and *The benefits of social media within the retail sector* which are elaborated on in this section.

5.3.2.1 Information collection

It appears that the results in Chapter Four found that there was no statistically significant relationship between *Information Collection* and *The benefits of social media within the retail sector*. The Empirical study revealed that the respondents do not benefit from using social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, Twitter and LinkedIn. In contrast, however, the Literature Review chapter of this study state that retailers do in fact benefit from using social media for the data or information collection of customers.

Contrary to the empirical findings in this study, the secondary sources in Chapter two state that when retailers obtain the contact details of customers, they are able to provide customers with up-to date information via social media regarding the market

developments and receive feedback from customers (Patterson, 2013; Pearlman & Abram, 2010:211). Retailers could also track the latest trends within the retail sector by observing online activity by customers in order to obtain newsfeeds internally and externally to the business (Gaille,2015). The Literature Review also found that other benefits obtained from social media usage are low-cost advertising and having access to information at the customers' disposal, are increased online visibility, as well as increased brand awareness (Lacho, 2010:127; Broughton *et al.*, 2013:1).

Based on the literature findings it is recommended that retailers should:

- Create brand awareness by using social media as an inexpensive information gathering source, such as Twitter or Facebook where the demographic information of customers is available for retailers to use in the market analysis;
- Use Twitter and Facebook as information-gathering platforms to collect biographical data and personal characteristics of the customers in order to understand the customer's needs and desires regarding the retailer's offerings.
- Use Twitter and LinkedIn for the dissemination of corporate information to give employees the opportunity to share vacancy information, share their opinions, share their experiences and/or comment on work-related issues;
- Advertise newsfeeds via social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest and LinkedIn for customers who will most likely be interested, based on the customer profiles which match the product offerings of the retailer;
- Use Facebook and Pinterest to keep in touch with the latest trending updates and to see what customers are saying about competitor's products. This information can be used to improve one's product and service offering.

5.3.2.2 Marketing

This study found no statistically significant relationship between *Marketing* and *the Benefits of social media within the retail sector*, implying that retailers do not benefit from using social media for example, for advertising products and services by sharing pictures; keeping customers informed on new product launches; providing customers

with a link to the retailers' social media page for ease of information gathering for the customer; or to ultimately drive customer traffic to the retailing business. However, based on literature findings, social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest and LinkedIn are proven to help market retailers online and in fact does benefit the retailers by increasing sales, brand awareness, as well as sometimes creating brand loyalty by retaining customers (Darnell, 2017; Nummila, 2015:1; Olsen, 2014:4). In addition, in marketing businesses social media is used to improve customer relationships by the creation, support and monitoring of online social media communities (Kiron, *et al*, 2012:10-11).

Based on the literature findings it is recommended that retailers should:

- Make use of social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter or Instagram, which are easily accessible and user-friendly, to market their business. The cheapest or at least affordable social media platform should be used for marketing and should not consume too much time to access. This can be done by making use of Facebook catalogues and collection advertisements as this allows businesses to showcase multiple items and catalogue specific items they want to advertise via Facebook;
- Encourage word-of-mouth interaction between customers through recommendations via Facebook and LinkedIn, as it is important for any business including retailers, thus retailers should create high-quality content and provide superior services to create brand ambassadors for their business;
- Use Pinterest's user-friendly pinning feature as a simplification tool to help organise and advertise one's ideas, as well as a sales tool to help recognise product offerings as this platform is known for having intense buyers who spend more money, more regularly than any users on other social media platforms;
- Create a visual experience for prospective customers by making use of LinkedIn's photo and video features for advertising products and services, due to the fact that customer respond better to media data and visual messages;
- Use the 'like button' on the content belonging to the customer's Facebook pages, as well as to add a website address to the businesses Twitter account which can be linked to other social platforms, leading to awareness for the

retailer, as customers can share, like and recommend comments made by other customers online;

- Make use of Twitter's "buy now" button which takes technological marketing a few steps further - especially for retailers as this option allows brands to develop pages with pricing and other information for customers to freely see;
- Consider using paid for advertising in addition to free advertising via social media platforms which are reputable such as Instagram, LinkedIn and Facebook, as it has proven to increase sales and create customer retention. The popularity of online purchasing is proof that social media is a great tool for connecting with customers.
- Make use of Facebook for marketing campaigns such as video, carousel and collection advertisements as it is a cheap and effective platform to advertise promotional deals and make business announcements, where Facebook also provides a solution for retailers to counter the customer's online complaints by allowing them to engage in direct conversations with customers;
- Use Twitter and Instagram to promote products and services by using product-orientated hashtags allowing people to see Tweets and posts from anyone. This feature allows consumers to view product videos, images and other business-related information that can lead to purchases for online and physical stores.

In the completion of this study, there have been many contributions which the researchers have made to the study.

5.4 CONTRIBUTION TO THE STUDY

Since limited research has primarily focused on the influence of social media in the retail sector, this study has focused specifically on how retailers use social media within the retail sector, in addition to the benefits received from the Nelson Mandela Bay region of the Eastern Cape. This study has contributed to the existing knowledge by means of empirical data which was based on primary information gathered by the researchers, as well as secondary data from previous researched findings from recognised articles and journals. Due to this study aiming at discovering the benefits associated with social media usage within the retail sector in the Nelson Mandela Bay,

the results of this chapter can be used to make recommendations to retailers. Two statistically significant relationships were found between the independent variables (*Employee engagement* and *Customer engagement*) and the dependent variable *the benefits associated with social media use in the retail sector*. Based on the Chapter statistics, retailers using social media related to *Customer engagement* and *Employee engagement*. It can therefore be said that currently retailers are not yet focused or realising the benefits of using it for marketing to customers or to obtain new customers to increase market-share.

5.5 DRAWBACKS OF THE STUDY AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This study has attempted to make significant contributions to the body of knowledge relating to the use and benefits of social media within the retail sector. There are however, several drawbacks to the study which should be considered when interpreting the findings of the study.

Firstly, although the researchers were able to find reliable secondary sources relating to how social media usage influences retailers, it is suggested that the future researchers further explore the topic in more depth. In addition, regarding the geographical location in which the study took place, the researchers limited the survey to only 130 respondents, while there is room for a bigger sample size of those residing in the Nelson Mandela Bay region of the Eastern Cape. Therefore, there is opportunity for future researchers to expand the geographical region of the study, from which the findings may differ. A further drawback to the study is that it only covered retailers. It is recommended that future research focus on the influence of social media use within business sectors.

With regard to primary research, a non-probability sampling technique, known as convenience sampling was used to conduct the research. This approach however was limited due to the fact that the final sample only consisted of 101 respondents within the Eastern Cape to represent a wider population, namely, the retail sector. It is

recommended for future researchers to survey a larger number of respondents as the sample to represent a larger portion of the population.

Even though various drawbacks were encountered while conducting the research, the results of the study contribute to the existing body of knowledge on the benefits of social media which serves in the retail sector of the Nelson Mandela Bay.

5.6 REFLECTION ON LEARNING

This study provided valuable insight of social media use by retailers, highlighting the benefits of social media usage. Furthermore, the study highlighted the benefits and drawbacks of social media platforms within the small retail business. The researchers were amazed that small retailers used social media platforms only for customer and employee engagement and not for information collection and marketing purposes.

In addition, this study has provided the researchers with theoretical and practical experience in terms of how to approach the research processes and the opportunity to conduct independent research. This study has taught the researchers the importance of research and writing not only in the academic setting, but also in the corporate setting. Moreover, this study has also given the researchers insight into what recommendations are to be made in the future to small businesses in the retail sector struggling with how to benefit from using specific social media platforms along with the drawbacks of each social media platform to assist retailers to succeed in the long-term.

5.7 CONCLUDING REMARKS

The investigation of the benefits that social media platforms have on the success of a business is growing, especially in the retail sector. Furthermore, given the size of the retail sector regarding the economy of South Africa, the benefits of using social media for retailers is important. This study presents a greater understanding and deeper insight into how social media platforms can be used to benefit small retail businesses.

The findings and recommendations for future research presented by this study attempt to provide retailers with practical recommendations on how social media can be integrated into a business - ultimately to benefit the business. In other words, the study shows how retailers can utilise social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Instagram and LinkedIn to positively influence employee engagement, customer engagement, information collection and marketing. This study made a reasonable contribution to retailers, as the results suggest that in order to improve employee engagement, customer engagement, information collection and marketing, the focus areas of a retailer could include the utilisation of Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Instagram and LinkedIn.

Moreover, although the concept of social media policies is fairly new to the commercial sector, as a safety precaution and to negate to the drawbacks associated with social media usage, retailers should ensure that there are policies in place to help protect them against the misuse of social media platforms. Therefore, the application of this study's recommendations and suggestions may possibly lead to retailers implementing more social media platforms into their business, ultimately leading to more successful retailers.

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ANNEXURE A: QUESTIONNAIRE



Summerstrand South Campus
DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS MANAGEMENT
28 July 2018

THE BENEFITS OF USING SOCIAL MEDIA IN THE RETAIL SECTOR

We are Honours students conducting research on the effects of social media usage in the retailing business environment. We are collecting information in the form of a survey to understand and quantify how social media usage can benefit retailers. This study will also provide insight into how social media is accessed and the frequency in which each social media platform is used for personal or work-related issues. The effective governance of social media usage in the business is also investigated as well as drawbacks posed. All sources will be treated as confidential and would be used for research purposes only. The majority of the data will be reported in statistical form and no individual respondents will be identified. The questionnaire is to be completed anonymously.

The questionnaire comprises of the following four sections:

- Section A: Demographic Information
- Section B: Access and frequency of social media usage
- Section C: Social Media uses
- Section D: Social media benefits
- Section E: Social media drawbacks
- Section F: Social media policy and governance

Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely

Mr C. Johnson & Mr D. van Zyl

Students

Prof S. Perks

Supervisor

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Kindly note that you have to be employed in a small retail business to complete this questionnaire. Indicate your response by making a cross {X} in the appropriate block.

1. Number of years employed in this retail business?

0-5	1	16-20	4
6-10	2	20+	5
11-15	3		

2. Job position?

Owner	1
Manager	2
Employee	3

3. Retail business employed in?

Clothing	1	Groceries	12
Cosmetics	2	Home decor	13
Furniture	3	Garden supplies	14
Food	4	Cellular products	15
Jewellery	5	Car accessories	16
Hardware	6	Shoes	17
Electronics	7	Toys	18
Electrical appliances	8	Linen	19
Sport equipment	9	Carpet	20
Gifts	10	Kitchenware	21
Alcohol	11	Tobacco	22
If other, specify			23

4. Gender?

Male	1	Female	2
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5. Ethnic affiliation?

Black	1	Coloured	3
White	2	Asian	4
If other, please specify			5

6. Age in years?

18-25	1	36-45	3	56-65	5
26-35	2	46-55	4	66+	6

7. Home Language?

Afrikaans	1	Portuguese	7	Spanish	8
Dutch	2	German	5	Xhosa	9
English	3	Mandarin	6	Zulu	10
French	4	If other, specify:			11

8. Highest level of education?

Grade 12	1	Diploma	3	Post-graduate diploma	5
Certificate	2	Degree	4	Post-graduate degree	6

9. Marital status?

Divorced	1	Unmarried	4
Living together	2	Widowed	5
Married	3		

10. How many years has the business been in existence?

0-5	1	16-20	4
6-10	2	20+	5
11-15	3		

11. The number of employees in the business?

0-10	1	21-30	3	40-50	5
11-20	2	31-40	4		

SECTION B: SOCIAL MEDIA ACCESS AND FREQUENCY OF USE

	1. To access social media platforms, I use a:	Always	Usually	Occasionally	Seldom	Never
1	Desktop	5	4	3	2	1
2	Laptop	5	4	3	2	1
3	Smartphone	5	4	3	2	1
4	Tablet/iPad	5	4	3	2	1

	2. I use:	Personal issues					Work related issues				
		Always	Usually	Occasionally	Seldom	Never	Always	Usually	Occasionally	Seldom	Never
1	Facebook	5	4	3	2	1	5	4	3	2	1
2	Twitter	5	4	3	2	1	5	4	3	2	1
3	Instagram	5	4	3	2	1	5	4	3	2	1
4	Pinterest	5	4	3	2	1	5	4	3	2	1
5	LinkedIn	5	4	3	2	1	5	4	3	2	1

SECTION C: SOCIAL MEDIA USES

	1. Our business uses social media to	Strongly agree	Agee	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly disagree
	Information collection					
1	Get up-to-date information about market developments	5	4	3	2	1
2	Learn about new innovations in retailing	5	4	3	2	1
3	Empower employees to solve work-related problems	5	4	3	2	1
4	Track retail trends	5	4	3	2	1
5	Receive new advertising newsfeeds	5	4	3	2	1
	Marketing					
6	Catalogue products/services for advertising	5	4	3	2	1
7	Upload products/services images and descriptions	5	4	3	2	1
8	Advertise for free via share/like/recommend comments by our customers/clients	5	4	3	2	1
9	Drive more traffic to website	5	4	3	2	1
10	Send customers/clients our business website link to obtain information	5	4	3	2	1
11	Advertise to a specific group of customers/clients	5	4	3	2	1
12	Advertise all our products	5	4	3	2	1
13	Test new market ideas on customers/clients	5	4	3	2	1
14	Network with other retailers to market our products	5	4	3	2	1
	Employee engagement					
15	Connect with co-workers about work issues	5	4	3	2	1
16	Liaise with management about problems experienced	5	4	3	2	1
17	Interact with the workgroup about urgent business matters	5	4	3	2	1
18	Post job listings to recruit employees	5	4	3	2	1
19	Share newsletters with employees	5	4	3	2	1
	Customer engagement					
20	Engage with new customers/clients about products/services	5	4	3	2	1
21	Send promotion details to existing customers/clients	5	4	3	2	1
22	Reconnect with customers/clients after a service complaints/breakdown	5	4	3	2	1
23	Engage with customers/clients about products/services changes	5	4	3	2	1
24	Obtain feedback from customers/clients about new ideas					
25	Obtain feedback from customers/clients about current products/services	5	4	3	2	1
26	Spark conversations between customers/clients	5	4	3	2	1

SECTION D: SOCIAL MEDIA BENEFITS

	1. Using social media in the business has the following benefits:	Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	Quicker task completion	5	4	3	2	1
2	Improved internal communication amongst employees	5	4	3	2	1
3	Swift recruitment of new employees through our network	5	4	3	2	1
4	Being more competitive	5	4	3	2	1
5	Improved teamwork	5	4	3	2	1
6	Increased operating efficiency	5	4	3	2	1
7	Increased employees' effectiveness	5	4	3	2	1
8	Increased our customer/client base	5	4	3	2	1
9	Extending customer/client reach cheaply	5	4	3	2	1
10	Improved collaboration with other retailers	5	4	3	2	1
11	Increased retail knowledge	5	4	3	2	1
12	Increased brand awareness	5	4	3	2	1
13	Obtaining information of sales trends	5	4	3	2	1
14	Effortless introduction to service providers and experts without in- person appointments	5	4	3	2	1
15	Purchases by customers/clients not otherwise considered	5	4	3	2	1
16	Increased our new product/service offerings	5	4	3	2	1
17	Referrals through positive comments/reviews by customers/clients	5	4	3	2	1
18	Visualisation of our products/service offerings for customers/clients	5	4	3	2	1
19	Increased website traffic	5	4	3	2	1
20	An online business presence	5	4	3	2	1
21	Increased customer/client loyalty	5	4	3	2	1
22	Increased business visibility	5	4	3	2	1

SECTION E: SOCIAL MEDIA DRAWBACKS

	1. Social media in the business has resulted in:					
1	Loosing work-time due to using it for personal communication	5	4	3	2	1
2	Negative online publicity been spread	5	4	3	2	1
3	Posting of negative online comments by an employee	5	4	3	2	1
4	Sharing negative feelings to clients online	5	4	3	2	1
5	Poor work quality due to too much time online for personal reasons	5	4	3	2	1
6	Work reputation being tarnished through customers/clients' online postings	5	4	3	2	1
7	Personal relationships between employee and customer/client	5	4	3	2	1
8	Personal relationships between colleagues	5	4	3	2	1
9	Employees claiming online information as their own	5	4	3	2	1
10	Increased stress levels due to higher work expectations	5	4	3	2	1
11	Managers intimidating employees	5	4	3	2	1
12	The business being exposed to malware or viruses	5	4	3	2	1
13	Loss of customers due to negative comments	5	4	3	2	1
14	Increased expenses due to excessive use of data	5	4	3	2	1
15	Leakage of confidential business information	5	4	3	2	1
16	Business reputation being tarnished due to customers/clients' negative comments/reviews	5	4	3	2	1
17	Loosing valuable staff headhunted by other retailers	5	4	3	2	1

SECTION F: SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY AND GOVERNANCE

	To monitor the effective use of social media my business:	Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	Requires that employees always disclose their identities	5	4	3	2	1
2	Has access to my social media pages	5	4	3	2	1
3	Can observe my social media activity	5	4	3	2	1
4	Adheres to local legal and ethical regulations when posting information	5	4	3	2	1
5	Does not allow employees to air frustrations or discontent	5	4	3	2	1
6	Has communicated the social media policy to all employees	5	4	3	2	1
7	Insists that employees clearly state whether posts are personal, or business related	5	4	3	2	1
8	Demands that comments on the business page be rectified and not deleted	5	4	3	2	1
9	Has an employee to oversee social media usage	5	4	3	2	1
10	Has disciplinary actions for misuse of social media	5	4	3	2	1
11	Demands approval from a senior staff member before placing a post	5	4	3	2	1

