

**UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL**

**The Role of Social Media as a Fundraising Tool in South African  
Non-Governmental Organisations**

**By**

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## Declaration

This dissertation denotes original work by the author and has not been submitted in any other form to another university. Where use has been made of work of other authors and sources it has been accordingly acknowledged and referenced in the body of the dissertation.

The research for this dissertation was completed in the Graduate School of Business and Leadership at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Research was undertaken under the supervision of Professor Manoj Maharaj during the period of January 2013 to December 2013.

Opinion expressed and the conclusions attained are those of the author and are not necessarily to be attributed to the Graduate School of Business and Leadership.

Signature:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Manoj Maharaj', written over a faint rectangular stamp.

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## **Abstract**

Social Media within the context of the emergence of Web 2.0 is a phenomenon whose reach and impact has grown exponentially and has radically changed the way in which individuals interact and the way in which companies do business. Social Media achieves this in part through the supporting technological infrastructure which is extending the reach of the internet beyond its traditional boundaries thanks to the increasing role played by mobile devices in linking users to the internet, particularly in developing regions of the world whose fixed line internet infrastructure is limited. The other element that allows social media to achieve this is the interactive character of Web 2.0 coupled with the modern consumers' desire to generate their own user content and media as opposed to merely being recipients of mass media flows generated and directed outwards by large faceless commercial interests. The opportunity to consolidate and grow market share offered by integrating social media into an organisations business strategy is coming to the fore at a time when the South African NGO sector is experiencing a funding contraction. Despite this research is showing that NGOs, locally and abroad, are not using social media strategically in their fundraising efforts. This study sets out to understand why this is the case by conducting exploratory research into the role played by social media in South African NGOs. Using an existing, but non-exhaustive, database of KZN NGOs an online survey was sent to 481 NGOs to which it received 41 complete responses. The data was analysed to generate descriptive statistics to help reveal the parameters that delineate the research topic. The variables in the survey were also operationalised so that they produced meaningful measures for submission to analysis by Tjan's Fit-Viability Framework which examined what proportion of the organisations possessed the core characteristics and capabilities to implement a social media fundraising strategy, against the proportion of those that were implementing such a strategy. Hypothesis testing for proportions was also conducted to test the significance of relationships that the literature suggested existed between certain organisational traits and the implementation of social media fundraising strategies. The significant finding of the research was that far more organisations possessed the characteristics and capabilities to implement a social media fundraising strategy than were implementing a strategy. This presence of unutilised potential prompted recommendations built around educating the NGO sector on social media within the context of Web 2.0, as well as on how to implement and maintain social media strategies drawing on case studies and research conducted with NGO stakeholders.

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# **Chapter 1: Introduction**

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## **1.1 Introduction**

Intrigued by Pillay's (2012) findings that few NGOs were using social media as a fundraising tool, and how little value it was perceived to lend to fundraising, this study set out to understand the role of social media in the fundraising strategies of South African NGOs. This chapter will introduce the reader to the motivation for the study, and its objectives. The more mundane characteristics of the thesis's layout and writing conventions will also be introduced.

## **1.2 Motivation for the Study and Problem Statement**

South African NGOs are facing a contracting funding environment (Ewing & Guliwe, 2008; Trialogue, 2011) which threatens their long term sustainability in the absence of them being able to generate new or alternate funding streams. The for-profit sector has discovered and embraced the opportunities that social media presents for engaging customers, consolidating market share, and growing new markets. This, along with Pillay's (2012) findings around the role of social media in NGO fundraising point to a perhaps obvious avenue that NGOs could engage to mitigate the risk from the contraction of traditional revenue streams. However, Pillay's (2012) findings deserved exploration to understand why this low adoption of social media could be the case before recommendations could be made as to how NGOs could engage social media strategically to bolster their sustainability and ensure continued delivery of their mission. In order to achieve this end the research question pursued was, "What is the role of Social Media in South African NGO's Fundraising Strategies?"

## **1.3 Focus of the Study**

The study examined core capacities and capabilities of a sample of NGOs that have a bearing on the ability of an organisation to successfully deploy a social media fundraising strategy. The aim was twofold; firstly to determine which variable or variables might be identified as being responsible for the lack of social media fundraising engagement; and secondly to submit them to Tjan's (2001) Fit-Viability Model to determine if the

combination of the variables could be responsible for the lack of social media fundraising strategy implementation. The identification of the weak performance areas were able to inform recommendations to empower NGOs to strategically engage the opportunities offered by social media.

#### **1.4 Objectives of the Study**

The research had three objectives which were driven by analysis of the data collected by the survey instrument. These will be discussed in turn below.

##### **1.4.1 Analysis of Descriptive Statistics**

Through the data collected by the online survey the study was able to present descriptive statistics on the sample through performing frequency analysis on the study variables. This will allow salient characteristics of the sample to be surfaced and understood which is a central goal of exploratory research.

##### **1.4.2 Fit-Viability Analysis**

Using the Fit-Viability Model developed by Tjan in 2001 the study used the results of a structured questionnaire to map the respondents implementation of a social media fundraising tool to a Fit-Viability Matrix to ascertain what proportion of the respondent organisations were in a position to successfully implement such a strategy. The findings of the Fit-Viability analysis were also considered against the descriptive statistics to help identify what blockages or institutional weaknesses exist which may be responsible for the low uptake of social media fundraising strategies by NGOs.

##### **1.4.3 Hypothesis Testing for Significance Between Variables as Asserted in the Literature**

The literature around the research problem suggests that certain organisational characteristics and behaviours can act as either inhibitors or promoters of an organisation's willingness and ability to adopt and implement a social media fundraising strategy. Through the descriptive statistics generated in the study cross-tabulations were performed which were submitted to hypothesis testing for proportions. The hypothesis testing allowed

the study to determine if the observed correlations between variables were significant or due to chance, thus corroborating or refuting the existing literature.

### **1.5 Limitations of the Study**

This research positioned itself as an exploratory study and as such questionnaire design was limited by the paucity of existing knowledge around the subject. Thus, as the analysis progressed and the landscape of the research problem was revealing itself in higher definition it became clear that elements of the survey questionnaire could be refined in future to control for potential ambiguities and include items to allow for greater contextualising of the key variables.

With over 120 000 organisations listed on the South African National NPO register the size of the population and its geographic spread this study would require a sample drawn randomly from a nationally representative sample frame for the results to be readily generalizable with greater confidence to the population. Given the number of responses required for a probability sampling method against the low response rates of internet surveys, and the logistics required to administer the survey through more traditional methods such a sampling approach was unfeasible for the scope of this exploratory study. The sampling frame selected was an eThekweni Municipality Database of NGOs which was subjected to a non-probability sampling approach. While this limits the generalizability of the results to the national population it is an accepted approach for obtaining preliminary data in an exploratory study in a timely and inexpensive manner.

### **1.6 Chapter Summary**

There are six chapters in this thesis, including this introduction. Chapter two presents an examination of prior research, existing literature, and available data pertinent to the exploration of the research question. The findings of this literature review revealed the incredible and growing reach of social media amongst private individuals and its adoption by commercial entities to better engage consumers. It also revealed that the characteristics which make it a useful tool for commercial entities are of equal significance to NGOs but that NGOs on the whole have nowhere near the same level or depth of adoption. The literature also confirmed that the South African funding environment is contracting, a salient fact which together with low NGO adoption of social media fundraising strategies

underpins the motivation for the study. Chapter three introduces and presents the research methodology employed to pursue the research question. Alongside the online survey tool and analysis of descriptive statistics it introduces the use of Tjan's (2001) Fit-Viability Model to better understand the problem, as well as the operationalisation of this model's variables so that they could be captured via the online survey in a measurable manner. The motivation for, and method of hypothesis testing between certain variables to test the significance of relationships suggested by the literature was also addressed in this chapter. Chapter four presents the research findings through a mix of descriptive statistics, a fit-viability analysis, and hypothesis testing. The salient findings here were that many more NGOs had the capacity and capability to implement a social media fundraising strategy compared to the number that were implementing such a strategy at the time of the research. Chapter five offers a discussion of the results. The discussion handles the findings within the context of existing literature and previous studies, as well as through making sense of the individual variables within the context of the whole of this research. This latter element is particularly salient around the fit-viability analysis and the hypothesis testing. Finally, chapter six presents recommendations and conclusions based on the research. The recommendations to address low NGO uptake of social media fundraising strategies are built around a core pillar of education of what social media is and how to incorporate it into organisational strategy. Recommendations for further study are born out of the cognisant ignorance which the experience and results of this exploratory study have afforded the researcher.

## **1.7 Summary**

Social media presents an opportunity for NGOs to consolidate and growth their revenue streams, while mitigating the impacts of present funding contraction. The for-profit sector has adopted social media and integrated it into their business strategy but the NGO, non-profit, sector whilst adopting social media has not exhibited near the same levels of strategic integration of social media into their business strategy.

This chapter presented an introduction to the research problem and an overview of the structure through the rest of the thesis. The following chapters will present an examination of the existing body of knowledge around the topic, the methodology for the research, and the findings and recommendations born from the research.

## **Chapter Two: Literature Review**

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### **2.1 Introduction**

With worldwide users of social media growing by 30%, from 244 million to 315 million in 2010, the rise of social media is nothing short of a global phenomenon (Rodriguez, et al., 2012, p. 365; Lalwani, et al., 2012). Advances in internet technology have seen social media evolving from a tool for merely connecting friends to a platform which allows unprecedented penetration into new market segments while fostering deeper relationships with customers and other stakeholders (Rodriguez, et al., 2012). While the literature contains a great deal of information on what social media are, how it works, how it could be measured, and what its significance is in different elements of commerce or for-profit business (van Zyl, 2009) there is a lot less available about what social media means for the non-profit sector. The available literature for the South African non-profit sector, is even more scant. Research of the South African sector demonstrated that only 7.8% of civil society organisations (CSOs) used social media for fundraising, only 32.8% of the sample believed that social media could be of some benefit towards fundraising, and only 15.3% of the sample believed that social media held more significance as a fundraising tool than traditional methods (Pillay, 2012). While social media best practice for the South African non-profit sector may be extrapolated from the for-profit literature and the limited international studies on the non-profit sector, this study seeks to understand the role of social media as a fundraising tool in South African NGOs (non-governmental organisations). In order to achieve this the literature review examines what social media is and why it is significant for the business sector. This is followed by a review of research conducted into social media practice in the non-profit sector, what an effective social media strategy should incorporate, and finally how an effective social media strategy could contribute towards an NGO's fundraising strategy.

### **2.2 The Shift From Old to New Media**

Traditionally print, radio and TV have been the primary means of information dissemination. One of the most notable characteristics of these traditional media is that the communication is unidirectional. The increasing use of digital computing has created channels which replace or transform "old media" (print and analogue broadcasting). The



rise of “new media” born on the exponential development of digital technologies shifts the control and uni-directionality of information flows. New media refers directly to “screen-based, digital (computer) technology involving the integration of images, text and sound” (Singh, et al., 2012, p. 3). Mass audiences today are no longer content to be passive consumers of content but they want to participate in and respond to mass media, they also want to create their own content and distribute it along the channels that mass media now make available to almost everyone with access to a computer. New media must be seen as a disruptive technology which has fundamentally shifted the nature of social interactions in both personal and business realms (Kothandaraman, et al., 2012, p. 333). The relative ease of accessibility to the supporting technology means that more and more individuals have the same opportunity to communicate with vast audiences, a position previously only enjoyed by large media corporations (Singh, et al., p. 2).

Social networking sites, or social media are new media designed specifically to facilitate social interaction using “highly accessible and scalable communication techniques” (Singh, et al., p. 2) which render the constraints of geography and limits on personal interaction null. Social media can transform mass communication into a mass interactive “polylogue”. What is more is that users aren’t paying to participate with anything other than their attention; social media present a comparatively cheap way to reach a receptive audience via interactive and on-going communication that mimics word-of-mouth promotion using new media (Bakeman & Hanson, 2012).

### **2.3 The Reach of Social Media**

The growth of social networking sites and their ubiquitous presence in everyday practices is shifting the way modern societies manage their social networks and conduct business on the internet. Currently 6 out of 7 people across the globe have internet access, and 1 in 4 people in the world use social media. These users have increased 18% from 1.47 billion in 2012 to 1.73 billion at the end of 2013. This growth is projected to reach a membership of 2.55 billion by 2017 (Squared Online, 2013).

While membership and use of these platforms has been traditionally dominated by the developed countries research is showing that not only are emerging markets experiencing a faster growth rate in internet and mobile adoption, but their social network users are also more engaged (Squared Online, 2013).

### 2.3.1 Patterns of Social Media Uptake Globally

The following statistics are distilled from an info-graphic published in December 2013 by “Squared”, a partnership between Google and Home Learning Collage, e-learning experts (Squared Online, 2013).

**Table 1: Social Media Use Across Regions**

<b>Region</b>	<b>North America</b>	<b>Western Europe</b>	<b>Central and Eastern Europe</b>	<b>Latin America</b>	<b>Asia</b>	<b>Middle East and Africa</b>
<b>Social Media Users 2013</b>	181 Million	174 Million	173 Million	216 Million	777 Million	209 Million
<b>Projected Growth of Social Media Use 2011 - 2017</b>	25%	46%	63%	114%	146%	191%

This table clearly shows that developing nations are not only holding their ground against (if not exceeding) social media use by developed nations in absolute numbers; but the rate of growth they have experienced in the last two years, and are projected to experience over the next four years are staggeringly beyond those experienced and expected by the more developed nations. These data support the relevance that social media and its associated strategies hold for organisations working in developing countries.

### 2.3.2 Social Media in Africa and South Africa

The African social media story is different from the Western experience in two key ways. In the first instance the majority of the continent has been introduced to the internet via mobile phones as opposed to through computers and fixed line infrastructure. In the second instance social media use is markedly different in that it is not primarily used as an entertainment or media consumption tool, but rather as an affordable communication platform in the face of limited fixed line communication infrastructure (Frontier Advisory and Deloitte, 2012). Due to these two characteristics the continent has managed to leapfrog

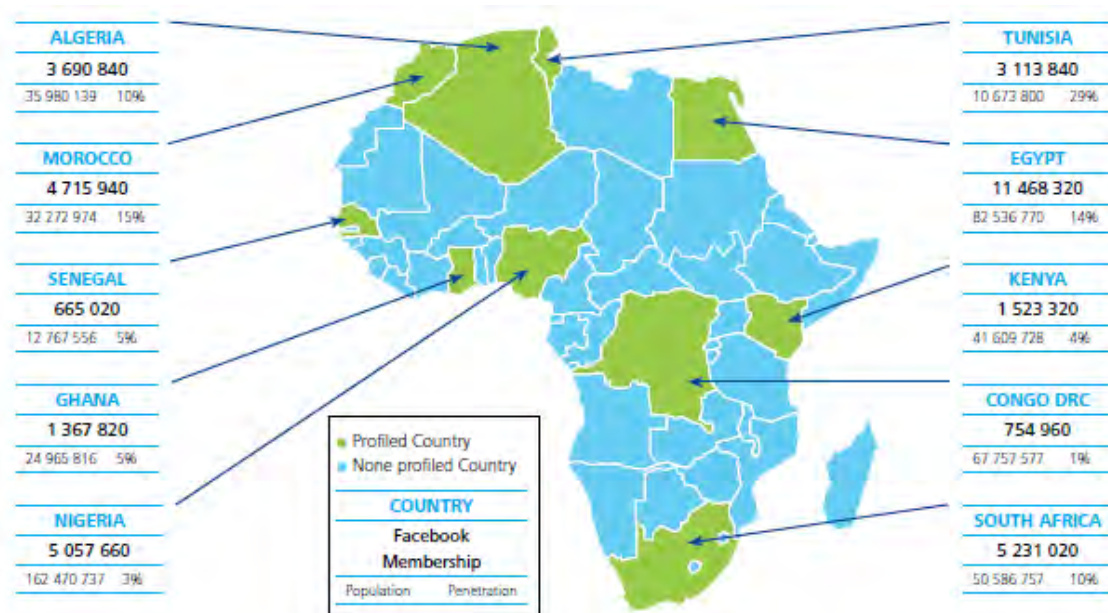
its way to lead a worldwide trend which sees mobile internet usage grow faster than fixed line internet, second only to Asia (Frontier Advisory and Deloitte, 2012).

**Table 2: Global Comparison of Mobile Internet Traffic**

Region	Mobile Traffic as a Percentage of All Internet Traffic
Asia	17.84%
Africa	14.85%
Europe	5.13%
Latin America	2.86%
North America	7.96%
Oceania	7.55%
Global	10.01%

(Frontier Advisory and Deloitte, 2012, p. 5)

This mobile traffic is driving social media engagement in Africa. Facebook is the most visited website on the continent, and African users account for 44.9 million of all Facebook users. The majority of these users access Facebook through mobile devices. Over 80% of logins in South Africa and Nigeria are via mobile phones (Frontier Advisory and Deloitte, 2012).



**Figure 1: Facebook in Africa. Source: Social Bakers and World Bank (2012) in Frontier Advisory and Deloitte (2012)**

The dominance of the mobile phone in social media engagement has also led to the development of local platforms. The most well-established of these is Mxit (a networking and instant messaging service) which has 10 million users in South Africa alone (Frontier Advisory and Deloitte, 2012). This is nearly twice the membership of Facebook.

### **2.3.3 Demonstrated Impacts of the Reach of Social Media**

Evidence and case studies exist to show the role of social media as a tool for advocacy, political activism, and fundraising. Select examples from these different spheres will be presented below.

#### **2.3.3.1 London Riots**

The 2011 London riots which erupted in Tottenham were the result of social dynamics in a defined geographic public space, the riot's spread across London and to other English cities was supported through the use of new social media (Baker, 2012; The Economist, 2011; Halliday, 2011). Social media provided a platform through which attitudes of dissent could be shared and rioters recruited and coordinated.

#### **2.3.3.2 The Arab Spring**

Research analysing social media data from the Arab Spring has been able to determine that social media played a central role in the Tunisian and Egyptian political uprisings (Howard, et al., 2011). The findings revealed three key areas in which social media influence the Arab spring: the political debates playing out around the Arab spring were shaped largely by conversations taking place on social media platforms; significant events on the ground were frequently preceded by heightened revolutionary chatter on social media platforms; finally, social media facilitated the spread of democratic ideas across borders.

This research was further able to determine the specific role played by different social media platforms in the above analysis:

- Blogs facilitated and allowed political discussions about a corrupt regime and the possibility for change

- Twitter was able to convey stories and news of successful coordination locally and across borders
- Facebook acted as an anchor point for networks of political dissatisfaction in Egypt
- Video based social media platforms, such as YouTube facilitated citizen journalism and the broadcasting of imagery and stories to a mass and international audience where the mainstream media channels were unable or unwilling to provide coverage (Howard, et al., 2011).

Neither the London Riots, nor the Arab Spring were caused by social media. What they did was provide the capability and platform for individuals and society to better coordinate and respond to conditions in their society (Howard, et al., 2011; Halliday, 2011).

#### **2.3.3.3 Save the Children's #HiddenCrisis Campaign**

In early 2012 Save the Children published a report highlighting the serious impact malnutrition had on the child's ability to develop and reach their full potential, as well as the extent to which malnutrition contributed to child mortality. After publishing the report they set out to raise awareness of the issue. In order to achieve this they used Twitter as the foundation of their campaign and invited strategic stakeholders from a range of sectors to participate in a publicly accessible online conversation using the hashtag "HiddenCrisis". The campaign achieved the following:

- A conversation lasting 14 hours across 12 time zones
- Reaching 30 countries across 6 continents
- 5.2 million people were reached on Twitter in a single day, with over 43 million impressions.
- Over 50 international hosts ranging from celebrities to Health Ministers and high profile development actors (Social Misfits Media and Unity Trust Bank, 2012).

#### **2.3.3.4 The Work of Avaaz**

Avaaz is an internet based global community that responds to and coordinates millions of members to take action against issues covering environmental, political and human rights spheres. The organisation explicitly acknowledges the role that new technology is playing in allowing them to build global constituencies who not only help shape the priorities of

the organisation, but can take initiatives to meaningful scale more rapidly than was possible before the advent of these new communication technologies and Web 2.0. In the past year Avaaz has played central roles in passing anti-corruption laws in Brazil; closing Dutch and German ports to whale meat; stopping the eviction of Maasai peoples from traditional lands in Kenya; pressured the Maldivain High Court to drop a flogging sentence against a 15 year old rape victim; lobbied for the signing of the Lough Erne Declaration which facilitates international governments working together to combat tax evasion; elevated the public profile of a campaign to grant asylum to Afghani interpreters who helped Western forces on the ground during the conflict, but who are now being hunted down and killed by the Taliban; the list of global and diverse activities goes on (Avaaz, 2013).

#### **2.3.3.5 The Work of Greater Good South Africa**

Voted to be one of the top 10 most trusted NPOs in the country in 2010, ‘The Greater Good South Africa Trust’ works to connect the public to news and research findings of social development initiatives, as well as informing the public of the needs of NPOs throughout South Africa. Its online community of over 13000 members has raised over R54 million, and its consultancy arm, Greater Capital, has facilitated the investment of over R800 million into social development and enterprise projects. They have one of the largest NPO social media presences in the country with over 6000 followers on Twitter and over 3000 likes on Facebook (Nonprofit Network, 2013). It becomes apparent how low these figures are in comparison with leading South African corporate social media accounts presented below.

#### **2.4 Significance of Social Media to the Business Environment**

In order to remain relevant and competitive in today’s market places firms are increasingly compelled to maintain and reinforce communications with all their stakeholders from current and potential clients, suppliers, staff and the public at large (Perrigot, et al., 2012, p. 540). In the past they have relied on traditional media, direct marketing, trade shows and personal selling to implement these communication strategies, but the rise of new media have transformed the ways in which firms can interact with and engage their stakeholders and implement their communication strategies (Perrigot, et al., 2012). Engagement is key

because engaged customers are more likely to play a role in supporting your marketing efforts by making recommendations and referrals to your specific product or brand (Brodie in Kothandaram, *et al.*, 2012). A 2009 article in the Economist corroborates this, reporting that consumers use social media to help them make purchases because they rely on “recommendations from friends” (Colliander & Dahlen, 2011, p. 314; The Economist, 2010). Consumer to consumer communication is said to influence a vast majority of purchase decisions and is called one of the most influential channels of communication in the marketplace (Colliander & Dahlen, 2011, p. 314).

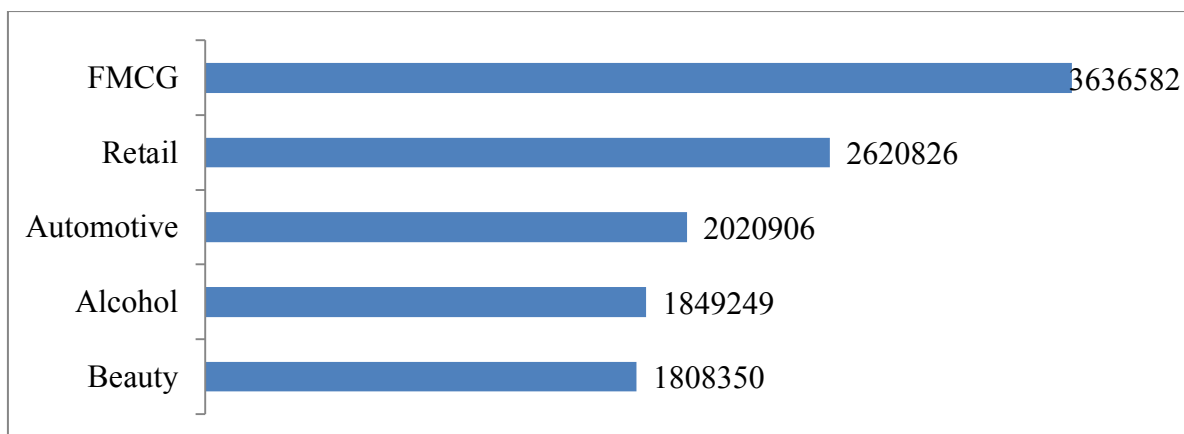
#### **2.4.1 South African Examples of the Significance of Social Media to the Business Environment**

An analysis of the South African brands on Facebook (Social Bakers, 2013) reveals the following characteristics which give flesh to the overview presented above.

**Table 3: Analysis of Top 20 South African Brands on Social Media – November 2013**

<b>Platform</b>	<b>Sum of Local Followers</b>	<b>Average Number of Posts</b>
Facebook	5 883 602	63
Twitter	1 006 125	264
YouTube	19 555	5

The cumulative sum of South African Facebook followers per industry, based on an analysis of the top 200 South African company Facebook profiles (by size of following) is presented graphically below.



**Figure 2: Facebook Following Across South African Industries**

The table below presents leading brands followed by South Africans on Facebook. It is interesting that four of the top 5 are South African companies, or initiatives; with Knorr being the only international company. This highlights the local and regional relevance that social media platforms represent while still being internationally accessible.

**Table 4: Top 5 Facebook Brands as Followed by South African Users in November 2013**

<b>Brand</b>	<b>South African Followers</b>	<b>Percentage of All Followers</b>	<b>Number of South African Facebook Users Talking About It on 15/11/2013</b>
<b>Knorr</b>	534 067	8%	21553
<b>What's For Dinner? (Knorr ZA)</b>	533023	99.9%	21529
<b>OLX South Africa</b>	506 296	96.2%	11487
<b>FNB</b>	417 746	94.3%	4039
<b>Vodacom</b>	286 713	88.3%	5797



The following data are perhaps the most telling of all when it comes to appreciating social media with the context of Web 2.0. These data represent ongoing consumer engagement by companies through Facebook. The data here are for the 5 Top South African consumer engaging companies in November 2013.

**Table 5: Top 5 Socially Devoted South African Facebook Pages - November 2013**

<b>Company</b>	<b>Average Response Time (minutes)</b>	<b>Response Rate</b>	<b>Number of South African Facebook Users Talking About It on 15/11/2013</b>
<b>Vodacom</b>	145	83%	5797
<b>FNB</b>	68	96%	4039
<b>Cell C</b>	91	92%	7152
<b>MTN South Africa</b>	697	89%	5945
<b>Capitec Bank</b>	262	96%	2688

What the above data are representing is that social media is not only very present in the business and public relations strategies of South African Companies but importantly, this presence is actively engaging with consumers. Beyond this these data also highlight the other dimension of social media's significance for business, and that is Facebook users talking about these brands to other Facebook users.

## **2.5 Types of Social Media**

When considering its role in the business place social media can be divided into two broad categories: those which support Push strategies and those which support Pull strategies (Kothandaraman, et al., 2012). The critical difference between these two strategies is the level of control the audience can exert over the flow of information.

Push strategies are those where sales people push information through social media that facilitate creation and rapid deployment of networks. The audience has little control over length, frequency and timing of these communications. Facebook, LinkedIn and Google

are examples of social media that facilitate push strategies. Kothandaraman *et al.* see this category as being network enabling social media.

Pull strategies on the other hand are those which invite, entice or *pull* the audience towards user generated content. Here the audience has far greater control as to whether they engage the communication and how they engage it. Social media that facilitate pull strategies include blogs and micro-blogs, Twitter being a prime example (Kothandaraman, et al., 2012). This category of pull social media is seen as being content enabling.

## **2.6 Social Media Platforms**

While all social media platforms bare the hallmarks of new media they possess different functionalities which allow for different methods of interaction, sharing, and collaborative content generation. The specific examples below have been chosen out of the myriad platforms because they are the ones that appear in the survey questionnaire for this study. Introducing them here exposes the reader to some of the variety of applications and functionalities that exist across different social media platforms.

### **2.6.1 Facebook**

Facebook is the most widely used social media platform and it has two core elements: the user's profile, and the user's home page (AAOS, 2011). The user's profile is outward facing and displays personal/organisational information and contact information, while the user's home page is their personal dash board which follows and displays updated information of the other Facebook profiles to which the user is linked through "friending".

Facebook is not only the most widely used social media platform, with over one billion users in 2013, but it also has the most diverse user base (in terms of gender, age, and culture) of the social media platforms (Duggan & Brenner, 2013). The following observation helps conceptualise the size of this community. "If Facebook were a nation, it would be the third most populous after India and China" (Lalwani, et al., 2012, p. 86).

### **2.6.2 Twitter**

Twitter is a micro-blogging platform, each post can be no more than 140 characters, including spaces (Fischer & Reuber, 2011). It allows users to post short burst of real time information which will be picked up their active followers or (if the account is public) any twitter user searching for specific content. These posts are called Tweets. Tweets can be posted via traditional desktop computers and laptops via the Twitter website or mobile phones with internet connectivity (AAOS, 2011). Twitter has over 230 million active users, and 500 million Tweets are sent per day (Twitter, 2013). Its format gives it the potential to be a live source of news and information.

The platform allows users to “retweet” other users’ posts that they want to share with their followers. This simple mechanism can allow relatively low-key user profiles to leverage massive exposure if they get retweeted by a user with a significant following.

The advantages of Twitter include that it is: a more active platform with faster interactions; through retweeting it can generate high visibility even for newer accounts; because of its broad user base it is easy to identify specific interest groups; it is proven to be an increasingly effective way to connect with others in your industry (AAOS, 2011; Lalwani, et al., 2012; Social Misfits Media and Unity Trust Bank, 2012).

### **2.6.3 YouTube**

YouTube is a platform on which users upload videos onto their profile, and can subscribe to other users’ “channels” to follow their broadcasts. Individuals with and without accounts on YouTube are able to search the platform for content that interests them. Commercially it is used to build a following, showcase new products and direct traffic to a website, it has 4 billion views a day (YouTube, 2013).

The advantages of YouTube as a platform are: the high potential for exposure through the high traffic volumes and the “stickiness” of the platform. The latter refers to the fact that visitors to the site generally don’t limit their consumption to one video, but due to links to similar or recommended content users spend a lot more time on the platform and watch more videos than the specific one they intended to watch (BlogTyrant, 2013). By including video that features personal addresses from key staff, brand ambassadors, or clients can strengthen existing or build new relationships, as well as build stakeholder trust.

#### **2.6.4 LinkedIn**

LinkedIn is a social media platform aimed at hosting users' professional profiles. It has 225 million users who are connecting to new and old colleagues, discovering professional opportunities and industry news, and gaining access to professional contacts in different sectors through the sites introduction request facility.

LinkedIn is useful in that while profile content is user generated the platform encourages other users to validate and verify their networks' credentials.

#### **2.6.5 Flickr**

Flickr is a social media platform which is designed for the online sharing and management of photos and videos. Its advantages lie in a functionality that allows for uploading content from multiple sources and pushing it out through multiple channels. Beyond the mere sharing of media Flickr, in the spirit of new media, allows for collaborative management and organising of the media. This allows for multiple meanings to be created out of the same content, and this makes the content more searchable (Flickr, 2013).

#### **2.6.6 Vimeo**

Vimeo is an online community that facilitates the posting and sharing of user generated videos. It hosts a mix of amateur, professional and corporate profiles totalling 18 million members and 102 million viewers worldwide (Vimeo, 2013).

#### **2.6.7 Pinterest**

Pinterest presents another social media format whereby users "pin" pictures they have uploaded, or copied from other sites on the internet to a "pin board". Users collect, organise and some might even say "curate" boards with content that interests them. This could be on a specific theme drawn from multiple sources, or driven by their own user created content. Like Twitter, users can "re-pin" photos from other boards which can exponentially increase a user's exposure.

### **2.6.8 Google Plus**

Google Plus (Google+) allows the user to integrate all of their Google services into one social media platform and currently has 500 million users (BlogTyrant, 2013). Its features allow users to follow other profiles and categorise them through assigning them to specific “circles” based on the nature of the relationship (friend, family, colleague etc); to create communities built around a specific topic; conduct online video meetings via its “Hangouts”; and the linking of a user’s Google+ account to any web content they have authored.

### **2.6.9 Instagram**

Instagram is a social media platform that is based on mobile devices, especially smartphones, which allows the user to take photographs, apply filters to them and then post them on Instagram with a comment. The Instagram platform gives users the option to simultaneously send their post to their Facebook, Twitter, or other social media accounts. As with other social media platforms users can follow other users, and comment on, or “like” their posts. Because it is mobile, and can be linked to other social media accounts it is a versatile tool for sharing live information across a variety of channels.

### **2.6.10 Tumblr**

Tumblr, like Twitter, is a microblogging social media platform. It allows the user to share text, images, video, and internet links from any internet connected device they are currently using. It hosts 152 Million blogs which have generated 68 billion posts since it was founded in 2007 (Tumblr, 2013). While it has the typical networking and following functionality its advantages lie in its share anything from anywhere functionality.

### **2.6.11 Digg**

Digg falls into the category of social bookmarking site. These are social media platforms where users create profiles on which the bookmark content from across all forms of media. Users can view each other’s bookmarked content and vote on it. Digg is useful for content research, trend following, linking to and creating communities, and allows for the maintenance of self-moderating niche communities (BlogTyrant, 2013).

## **2.7 Defining the NGO**

Several terms are used interchangeably in the literature and daily discourse to refer to a variety of organisations working as agencies under the auspices of civil society sector; CSO (Civil Society Organisation), NGOs (Non-Governmental Organisations), NPOs (Non-Profit Organisations), and CBOs (Community Based Organisations) (Department of Social Development Republic of South Africa, 2009, p. 9; Department of Social Development Republic of South Africa, 2013) . In order to provide a foundation for the use of the term NGO throughout the rest of this thesis some discussion of what civil society is will be beneficial. Salmon *et al.* (2003) in the benchmarking study on NPO governance (Department of Social Development Republic of South Africa, 2009, p. 10) offer the following definition which addresses economic, legal and institutional perspectives for organisations working under this banner; “[a] civil society organisation is one that receives the predominant portion of its income from [donations as opposed to market transactions]... takes a particular legal form... [and] promotes the public good, encourages empowerment and participation, or seeks to address the structural roots of poverty and distress.”

Swilling and Russell (2002) in the benchmarking study on NPO governance (Department of Social Development Republic of South Africa, 2009, p. 9) quote the following definition, “NGOs are private, self-governing, voluntary, non-profit distributing organisations operating, not for commercial purposes but in the public interest, for the promotion of social welfare and development, religion, charity, education and research.”

The definitions above satisfy the use of the term NGO throughout the rest of the dissertation.

## **2.8 The Role of NGOs in Society**

While NGOs include social and sporting clubs, and cultural, environmental, and religious organisations they also include social development and social justice organisations. It is through these last two that NGOs play a crucial role in supporting the functioning and accountability of democratic systems through demanding increasing transparency and accountability from government agencies and duty bearers. NGOs also play a role in addressing the needs of marginalised and vulnerable communities through facilitating

socio-economic growth and social development through advocacy or programme implementation (Department of Social Development Republic of South Africa, 2009; Department of Social Development Republic of South Africa, 2013). In this regard many NGOs are seen to be delivering services which the government is mandated to deliver.

## **2.9 The Significance of the Research Problem to the South African NGO Sector**

The promise of the new democracy and the international response to HIV/AIDS in the mid-1990's led to a sea change in the way South African NGOs could source and access funding. Whilst the available resources were larger the fundraising became increasingly project focused (as opposed to programmatic) and donor driven (Krige, 2011). Since 1994 KZN in particular has received the second largest commitments from donor funding in South Africa (Ewing & Guliwe, 2008). This has led to many NGOs becoming captive to certain large foreign funders (Ewing & Guliwe, 2008; Wescott, 2009).

“The World around [NGOs] is a fast changing one... and the conditions globally at the end of the first decade of the 21st century are far from favourable for agencies working in the development sector” (Trialogue, 2011, p. 89 & 91).

The South African NGO sector now finds itself facing a difficult future brought about the confluence of the international financial climate and the country's emergence as a leading democratic and economic force on the continent (Ewing & Guliwe, 2008, p. 275). Donors are shifting focus to other countries as South Africa emerges as a stable democracy with a functioning economy (Ewing & Guliwe, 2008; Trialogue, 2011) and even those donors that remain in South Africa were not immune to the global economic recession (Ewing & Guliwe, 2008, p. 275).

### **2.9.1 Sources of South African NGO Funding**

Local Corporate and Trusts, and Foreign Donors lead the funding source log in 2003 and 2011 (first and second place, respectively), however, both Corporate and Foreign Donor sources show a significant drop between the two periods (there is no 2003 data for Trusts) (Trialogue, 2011, p. 33). Government comes in as the fourth leading source of funding across the two periods, also showing a marked drop (Trialogue, 2011, p. 33). Coming in at the lowest contributions are Self-Generated and Private Individual funding sources.

Interestingly enough these two are the only two which show an improvement over the period (Triologue, 2011, p. 33). Over the 2010 to 2011 period 16% of NGOs reported that self-generated income contributed the most to increased income. For the 10% that experienced decreased income for the period this was due to diminished trust, corporate and foreign donors.

Salaries are a significant expense for NGOs representing an average of 33% of the budget; this is often an expense least likely to be funded by corporate. Further, 30% of the corporate participating in this study do not fund NPO operating costs as a matter of policy (Triologue, 2011, p. 40).

### **2.9.2 Determinants of Personal Donations**

In determining the factors and characteristics of an NGO that influence individual giving Nunnenkamp and Ohler (2011) identified the following characteristics as having positive corollaries with individuals' decisions to donate: a large fundraising expenditure; being in receipt of significant funding from donor foundations; and being able to generate significant self-generated funds; and when donations could be designated towards a specific activity.

### **2.10 Social Media and NGOs**

In the last 15 years the Internet has become a new channel through which NGOs have sought to communicate their message and leverage funds (Treiblmaier & Pollach, 2006). Despite these NGOs typically have limited skill to maintain online content, or justifying expenditures in this regard and despite the potential offered by this channel its efficacy in the first decade of this century was questioned as many standing donors of an organisation may never actually visit its website (Treiblmaier & Pollach, 2006, p. 809).

What does become clear (Treiblmaier & Pollach, 2006; Hou, et al., 2009) is that, as the for-profit sector has learnt, simply having a web presence is not enough. The weakness for most NGOs lies in the fact that if NGOs don't have the ability to maintain websites, which are far more static than social media applications, they will struggle to remain relevant on these platforms unless they make a concerted and strategic effort.



The evidence so far has established that social media is a significant aspect of how the world interacts and does business. But a question that needs to be asked is, “has social media become a critical part of how the world does good?” (Social Misfits Media and Unity Trust Bank, 2012). In research conducted by Unity Trust Bank and Social Misfits Media in the UK it was found that the majority of NGOs were not strategically using social media. This supports Treiblmaier and Pollach’s concern over the ability of NGOs to be relevant on these platforms. This is a significant issue as social media presents a free tool which these organisations can use to reach a wider audience. A wider audience is desirable because “NGOs exist to create social capital by engaging social networks” (Saman, 2009); this is where they raise funds to finance their operations.

### **2.11 Obstacles faced by NGO’s when Engaging Social Media Strategies**

Buy-in of senior leadership is seen as one of the major challenges of NGOs and businesses alike (Kantner & Fine, 2010; Kothandaraman, et al., 2012; Social Misfits Media and Unity Trust Bank, 2012). The reasons for this stems from a lack of understanding of social media, to resistance to investing resources to an initiative with unclear success metrics, and fear of not having full control of a public two-way communication platform (Kantner & Fine, 2010; Kothandaraman, et al., 2012; Social Misfits Media and Unity Trust Bank, 2012).

But the research has revealed that the organisations in the study were not using social media as strategically as possible not due to lack of will, but rather due to lack of skills, time or understanding (Social Misfits Media and Unity Trust Bank, 2012).

### **2.12 The Requirements of an Effective Social Media Strategy**

The literature mentions the following (Social Misfits Media and Unity Trust Bank, 2012):

- Integration with the overall communications or fundraising strategy
- A measurable target or goal
- Active engagement of individuals and issues on the social media platform
- Exploration of new relationships and networks
- Tracking of progress against the target or goal

### **2.13 The Benefits of Social Media for NGOs**

A key opportunity offered to NGO's by social media is the leveraging of individual giving. The benefits of pursuing individual donors can be seen in that as opposed to corporate or foreign donors, individuals are less concerned with "earmarking" their specific donations (Trialogue, 2011, p. 89). This means that funds generated here can be used to cover core operating costs, or as unrestricted funding, which places the organisation in a position to experiment and dynamically respond to community development issues without facing a potential breach of contract with a large project specific corporate or foundation donor. In the face of decades worth of "traditional" methods still not having succeeded in eradicating social ills and injustice the need for innovation and risk-taking is significant (Wescott, 2009, p. 21). Being able to leverage unrestricted funds through a successful Individual Giving strategy will not only contribute towards an NGO's sustainability and autonomy of mission and vision, but will also give it the much needed freedom to strategise outside of the box towards developing increased efficiencies whilst not risking its financial sustainability through earning the ire of a disgruntled project-specific donor. Examples of organisations who can claim to be fully autonomous and uncompromising in their mission are:

- **Avaaz:** This organisation which is mentioned earlier is totally member funded, and they pride themselves on this, as this is what gives them the autonomy to respond authentically, sincerely and immediately to issues that are flagged by their community. Their website states, "No corporate sponsor or government backer can insist that Avaaz shift its priorities to suit some external agenda—we simply don't accept funds from governments or corporations" (Avaaz, 2013).
- **Wikipedia:** This online reference website has 500 million unique visitors a month. Despite this traffic it has never adopted a for-profit model in order to preserve the integrity and sanctity of the site as a place of learning and sharing (Wikipedia, 2013).

### **2.14 Building Trust in a Virtual Space**

Research into the efficacy of "Donation" buttons on NGO websites revealed that trust plays an important role in determining action once the base levels of marketing communication have played their part (Gibbons, 2010; Lasilla, 2010). Trust must

understandably play a role in any form of charitable giving or donation. Social media platforms offer organisations and their fundraisers opportunity to exhibit trust-building behaviours and activities (Kothandaraman, et al., 2012, p. 340).

## **2.15 Summary**

Social media has been recognized as an important tool to facilitate access to a larger audience while also nurturing a deeper relationship with the client and prospective client. NGOs play an important role in society through supporting and holding democratic systems accountable while championing the rights and serving the needs of vulnerable and marginalised groups. Despite the important function they perform many find their sustainability tenuous due to a shifting and retracting funding environment. While the for-profit sector is embracing social media as a tool to drive market growth and consolidation, research is showing that the NGOs are not deploying social media strategically or effectively towards growing and consolidating their revenue streams. The following chapter will introduce the research methodology employed to investigate the role of social media as a fundraising tool in South African NGOs.

## **Chapter Three: Research Methodology**

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### **3.1 Introduction**

In seeking to understand the role of social media as a fundraising tool in South African NGOs an exploratory research approach was required. The limited research available revealed how few organisations were using it as a fundraising tool, and how little value it was perceived to lend to fundraising by NGOs (Pillay, 2012). An exploratory approach was chosen as this can refute or corroborate this finding and allow for greater understanding of the phenomenon.

### **3.2 Aims and Objectives of the Study**

The study seeks to understand what role social media plays as a fundraising tool in South African NGOs. The study aims to present descriptive data on NGOs use of social media as a fundraising tool, as well as to provide an analysis of NGOs capacity to institute a social media fundraising strategy.

In order to achieve the latter the study has submitted the data to Tjan's Fit-Viability Framework (2001) and presented an analysis of the findings to better understand the phenomenon. The Fit-Viability Framework measures the fit of a new initiative against an organisation's existing capabilities, and processes; and the viability of the new initiative against its projected pay-off.

### **3.3 Participants and Location of the Study**

The benefits that social media offer to NGOs in the face of a transitioning funding landscape were discussed in the literature review. Based on these benefits and the particular context of South African's social development needs and shifting funding pools the study has been conducted with a sample of KwaZulu-Natal based NGOs in South Africa.

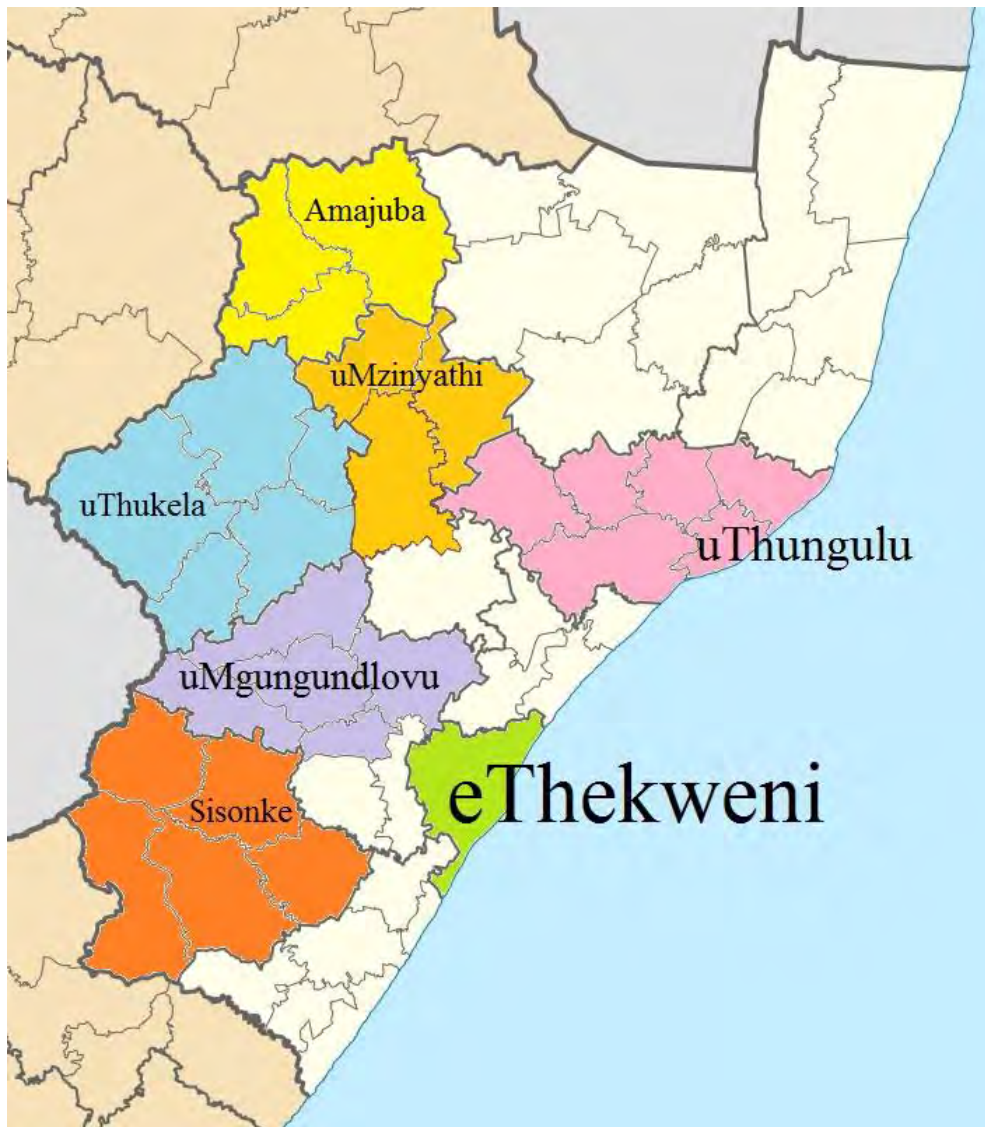
### **3.4 Research Design and Methods**

The research methodology adopted must take its cue from the nature of the research problem (De Vos, 2001). The quantitative method is concerned with generating data of an objective and numerical nature. It has a more formalised and rigorous approach with clearly delineated outputs which resemble the methods of physical science (De Vos, 2001, p. 15). An online survey questionnaire has been used to gather and generate quantitative data towards delineating the parameters and current state of the research area. This approach allowed for structured questions to be delivered to multiple respondents simultaneously, as well as ease of storage, retrieval and quantitative analysis (Murthy, 2008, p. 841). Further, using an internet based survey platform negated limitations of distance and time as respondents could be reached anywhere and were free to take the survey at their convenience.

### **3.5 Population**

At the end of March 2013 there were 102 297 organisations on the South African NPO register. Gauteng is home to the largest proportion of NPOs, 32%, with KZN and Limpopo staggered behind at 20% and 11% respectively. The Northern Cape has the smallest representation at 2% ( Department of Social Development Republic of South Africa, 2013).

The South African NPO Register at the time of this research lists over 120 000 organisations nationally. In 2011 there were 15 235 registered NPOs in KwaZulu-Natal. Of these 15 235, 23% were based in eThekweni municipality; 13% in uThungulu and 11% in uMgungundlovu (Department of Social Development Republic of South Africa, 2011). uThukela, uMzinyathi, Amajuba, and Sisonke each have less than 10% of the provinces registered NGOs (Department of Social Development Republic of South Africa, 2011). This distribution is captured below with font size indicating the relative proportion of NPOs in these seven most represented districts.



**Figure 3: Weighted Distribution of NPOs in KwaZulu-Natal**

### **3.5.1 The Need to Sample**

While research in general is interested in studying a given population the reality is that it is often, for reasons of logistics, time and cost, unfeasible to engage the whole population in a research project. To overcome this obstacle research studies make use of sampling. A sample refers to a selection of elements from the population (Sekaran & Bougie, 2009, p. 263), from which inferences about the population as a whole can be made.

### **3.5.2 Probability and Nonprobability Sampling**

As mentioned above sampling is undertaken to reduce the elements of a population to a more manageable size which can be studied with the aim of then generalizing the results from the sub-set back across the whole population. Probability sampling refers to techniques whereby elements in the population have an equal and known chance of being selected as opposed to nonprobability sampling where elements in the population do not have an equal probability of being selected (Sekaran & Bougie, 2009, p. 276). The core factor in deciding which route to use depends on how representative the research requires the sample to be of the entire population. The more representative the more generalizable the results of the research are to the whole population (Sekaran & Bougie, 2009, p. 278).

### **3.5.3 Sampling Method**

Given the population characteristics mentioned above a probability sampling approach would require 378 elements (Sekaran & Bougie, 2009) to be selected from the population; when the low expected return rates (0.75%) of internet surveys (Resnick, 2012) are taken into account this would require the survey be sent to anywhere up to 50400 respondents. The logistics and time required around this scale of effort, while necessary for a representative study, exceeds the scope of this exercise. Given this limitation, in conjunction with the fact that the research is exploratory in nature the decision was taken to position this research as a pilot study and employ another sampling approach discussed below.

The eThekweni Municipality website contains an “NGO Database” of civil society organisations offering services within the municipality. This database of 734 organisations was selected as the sample frame of the study. Due to the research tool being an internet administered survey the 481 organisations with a listed email address were then included in the sample. Given expected return rates of internet surveys all elements of the sample frame were sent the survey questionnaire. This relegates the sample design to purposive sampling which is a nonprobability technique. Despite this meaning that the results of the study cannot be generalised to the entire population, non-probability sampling is a recognised way to obtain preliminary information on a topic in a timely and inexpensive manner (Sekaran & Bougie, 2009, p. 276).

### **3.6 Theoretical Framework**

A theoretical framework serves as a foundation upon which the research process rests by providing a conceptual grounding through identifying the relationships between the variables present in the study (Sekaran & Bougie, 2009, p. 69).

The theoretical framework employed in this study is the Fit-Viability Model (FVM). This model has been selected because its development arose out of research examining how companies could decide on whether or not to invest in a new initiative in a structured and objective manner (Tjan, 2001; Liang, et al., 2007). Through applying this analysis to the sample elements the study is not only able to present descriptive statistics on what proportion of organisations are employing social media fundraising strategies but more importantly what proportion of organisations are in a position to invest successfully in such an initiative according to the FVM. A comparison between these two results will contribute a greater depth of understanding to the phenomenon.

#### **3.6.1 The Fit-Viability Model**

The Fit-Viability Model (FVM) was developed as a decision making tool (Tjan, 2001; Liang, et al., 2007) on whether a specific technology can be successfully adopted. The FVM is a two dimensional model comprised of fit on the one axis and viability on the other. The fit axis measures how consistent the new technology is with the “core competence, structure, value and culture of [an] organisation” (Liang, et al., 2007, p. 1156; Tjan, 2001). The viability axis, on the other hand, measures the potential added value the technology represents, and the human resource, infrastructural, and financial requirements/expectations to adopt the technology (Tjan, 2001; Liang, et al., 2007).

The FVM has revealed which organisations are in a position to successfully implement a social media strategy even if they do not have a social media strategy or even if they have not yet begun to consider social media as a fundraising tool. This is a question that cannot be answered by a direct survey item but is rather determined by plotting the relationship of several specific variables on a Fit-Viability matrix.



### **3.6.2 Variables**

The descriptive analysis has drawn on variables pertaining to general organisational demographic characteristics. For the Fit-Viability analysis further variables were added to explore the fit and viability of social media fundraising strategies within the respondent organisations. The variables assigned to each of the categories are presented below.

#### **3.6.2.1 Fit**

The qualitative independent variables under this category are (Tjan, 2001):

- i) Alignment with the company's other initiatives
- ii) Fit with organisational structure
- iii) Fit with company's culture and values
- iv) Ease of technical implementation

#### **3.6.2.2 Viability**

The quantitative independent variables under this category, adapted from Tjan's original model are:

- i) Fundraising potential
- ii) Time to realise value
- iii) Additional staff requirements
- iv) Additional cost to company

#### **3.6.2.3 Operationalisation of the Variables**

The variables were operationalized through designing questionnaire items that would reveal the variable in a measurable way. Due to the quantitative nature of the "Viability" variables it would be unreasonable to assume that respondents would have hard data on the "Fundraising Potential" or "Time to Realise Value" of social media. Given this limitation their perceptions were used as proxies for these variables. The table below presents the variables from Tjan's FVM alongside the questionnaire items designed to measure them.

**Table 6: Operationalisation of Fit-Viability Model Through Questionnaire Design**

Variable	Questionnaire Items
Alignment with core capabilities	<p><b>Q6)</b> Which Social Media platforms does your organisation currently have a presence on?</p> <p><b>Q11)</b> Does the organisation have a staff position with detailed Key Performance Areas which include managing social media?</p>
Alignment with the company's other initiatives	<p><b>Q9)</b> If your organisation has a website does it use this platform to actively appeal for funds?</p> <p><b>Q10)</b> What emphasis does the organistaion’s fundraising strategy place on the “Individual Giver” (anybody making a once off or recurring donation in their personal capacity)?</p>
Fit with organizational structure	<p><b>Q11)</b> Does the organisation have a staff position with detailed Key Performance Areas which include managing social media?</p>
Fit with company's culture and values,	<p><b>Q12)</b> Would you say the organisation embraces changing and new technologies?</p> <p><b>Q13)</b> Which of the following statements would best describe your organisation's external communication policy and practice?</p>
Market-value Potential	<p><b>Q16)</b> Do you believe social media can be used to increase your donor pool generally?</p> <p><b>Q18)</b> Do you believe that "individual givers" could be harnessed successfully enough to make-up a significant portion of your donor income?</p>

Time to positive cash flow	<b>Q19)</b> How long do you think it would take to see a return from a social media fundraising strategy?
Personnel Requirement	<b>Q8)</b> Does the organisation have a dedicated staff member to manage its online presence?
Funding Requirement	<b>Q20)</b> To what extent would the organisation's operating budget need to be increased to accommodate the human resource and infrastructural needs were a social media fund raising strategy to be introduced?

### **3.7 Data Collection**

The core of any research design is the data collection method (Sekaran & Bougie, 2009, p. 184). There are many methods available to the researcher and each is best suited to different contexts and requirements of the research study. Quantitative data was collected via the administration of an online survey.

### **3.8 Instrument Construction and Analysis of Quantitative Data**

An online survey questionnaire was used to collect quantitative data. The quantitative data will be analysed using Excel and SPSS analysis software. The descriptive statistics have been presented through computing frequencies of organisational characteristics. The Fit-Viability analysis will be undertaken through standardising the questionnaire scores per associated variable and then plotting the average Fit and Viability score per organisation on a matrix.

As outlined in the theoretical framework, above, there were eight independent variables (falling under two dimensions) which will be examined for the FVM. Questions sets were designed to probe each of these variables in order to score them and plot them on a Fit-Viability matrix.

### 3.8.1 Hypothesis Testing

Against the above results hypothesis testing for proportions will also be conducted to test whether these data provide convincing evidence that certain organisational characteristics, as mentioned in the literature, have a significant bearing on the presence or absence of a social media fundraising strategy in the respondent organisations.

Using this formula:

$$\frac{p_1 - p_0}{\sqrt{\frac{p_0(1 - p_0)}{n}}}$$

Where:

$p_1 = \text{Sample Proportion}$

$p_0 = \text{Null Hypothesis Proportion}$

Based on the following Cross Tabulation (figures are for example only):

**Table 7 : Example of Cross Tabulation for Hypothesis Testing**

<b>Organisation Characteristic</b>	<b>Social Media Fundraising Strategy</b>	<b>No Social Media Fundraising Strategy</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percentage of Organisations with a Social Media Fundraising Strategy</b>
<i>Presence of Characteristic</i>	5	15	20	$p_1 = 0.25$
<i>Absence of Characteristic</i>	1	20	21	$p_0 = 0.048$
Total	6	35	41	

In order to determine if these data provide convincing evidence that organisations scoring low on a given characteristic do not adopt social media fundraising strategies to the extent that organisations that score high for these characteristics do the data must be submitted to hypothesis testing for proportions.

This is done through proposing a null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) which states that the difference between the observed sample proportion and the Null Hypothesis Proportion is zero; i.e. scoring highly or poorly for the given characteristic has not effect on the organisation's implementation of a social media fundraising strategy. The null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) is stated thus:

$$H_0: p_0 - p_1 = 0$$

In hypothesis testing an alternative hypothesis ( $H_A$ ) is also proposed. If the  $H_0$  is rejected then the  $H_A$  is accepted. There are two possibilities for the  $H_A$ :

$$H_A : p_0 - p_1 > 0$$

$$H_A : p_0 - p_1 < 0$$

For the purposes of this study the  $H_A$  will be proposing that  $p_0 - p_1 < 0$ . That is, the presence of, or the higher score for, the given characteristic has a significant positive effect on the organisation's implementation of a social media fundraising strategy.

Once the hypotheses have been stated the formula given above is used to calculate a test statistic,  $Z$ . The conclusion about the hypothesis is made based on where the test statistic falls on the  $Z$ -distribution in relation to the critical value. The critical value is determined by the significance level ( $\alpha$ -value) chosen for the analysis. The  $\alpha$ -value chosen for this study is 0.05 which equates to a critical value of 1.64. If it falls beyond the critical value the  $H_0$  is rejected. If it falls within the critical value the test fails to reject the  $H_0$ .

### **3.9 Testing the Instrument**

Before the survey went live it was submitted to a convenience sample of 3<sup>rd</sup> year MBA students at the Graduate School of Business and Leadership (GSBL). They were instructed to provide feedback on the flow and usability of the survey, to provide comment on any survey items where wording may have been unclear or ambiguous, and to flag any grammatical or spelling errors that may have slipped through editing.

### **3.10 Summary**

Given the paucity of available information on the role of social media in South African NGOs' fundraising strategies this study engaged an exploratory approach. Descriptive

statistical analysis allowed organisational characteristics to be presented and understood as relative frequencies; as well as for the testing of significance of relationships between different variables. Against the descriptive analysis and in order to better understand the organisations' ability to implement a social media fundraising strategy Tjan's (2001) Fit-Viability Model (FVM) was employed as the theoretical framework to explore the relationships between the variables being studied. The results of the research are presented in the following chapter.

## Chapter 4: Presentation of Results

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### 4.1 Introduction

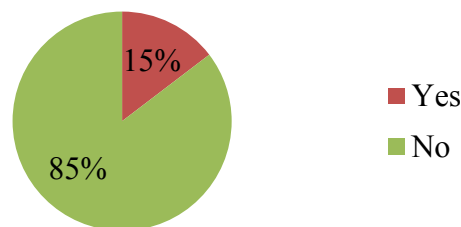
Of the 481 organisation invited to participate 41 unique completed responses were generated. The results of these responses are presented below. Descriptive statistics of the sample are presented first. This is followed by cross tabulations of key variables and a presentation of the results of the Fit-Viability analysis.

### 4.2 Descriptive Statistics

This section presents a frequency analysis of variables which have a bearing on an organisation's ability or intention to implement a social medial fundraising strategy.

#### 4.2.1 Organisations Which Currently have an Explicit Social Media Based Fundraising Strategy

Only 15% of the organisations have existing social media fundraising strategies.

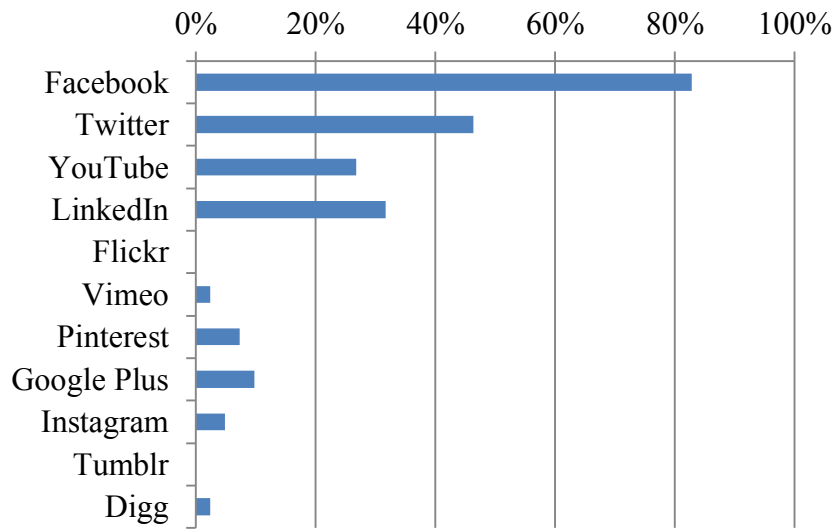


**Figure 4: Percentage of Organisations with an Explicit Social Media Fundraising Strategy**

#### 4.2.2 Social Media Platforms being used by NGOs in KZN

Facebook is by far the most frequently reported social media platform, with 83% organisations reporting having a presence on this platform. Twitter is the next most frequently used platform with 46% of organisations having a presence on this platform. In third and fourth place, respectively, 32% of organisations also maintain a presence on

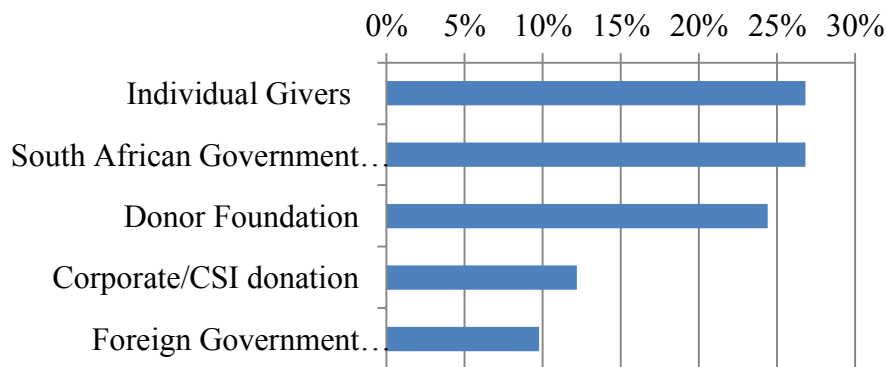
LinkedIn, and 27% on YouTube. There is limited presence on other social media platforms such as Vimeo, Pinterest, Google Plus, and Digg.



**Figure 5: Social Media Platforms Being Used by NGOs**

#### 4.2.3 Primary Income Streams of NGOs in KZN

Individual Givers and South African state agencies and departments are 2 of the leading sources of income with 11 organisations citing each of these as their primary sources. Donor Foundations are the third most common source of primary income for the organisations. Foreign Government Agencies are the least cited primary source of income.



**Figure 6: Primary Sources of Income**



#### 4.2.4 Organisations with a Position in their Structure with Key Performance Areas Directly Linked to Social Media

Just under a half, 44%, of the organisations have a staff position in their structure with key performance areas linked to social media.

#### 4.2.5 Staff Complements of Organisations

Of the respondent organisations 59% have a staff size of 25 or less individuals, with just under a quarter of the organisations reporting a staff size between 26 and 75 individuals. The minority of the organisations, 7%, have 200 or more staff.

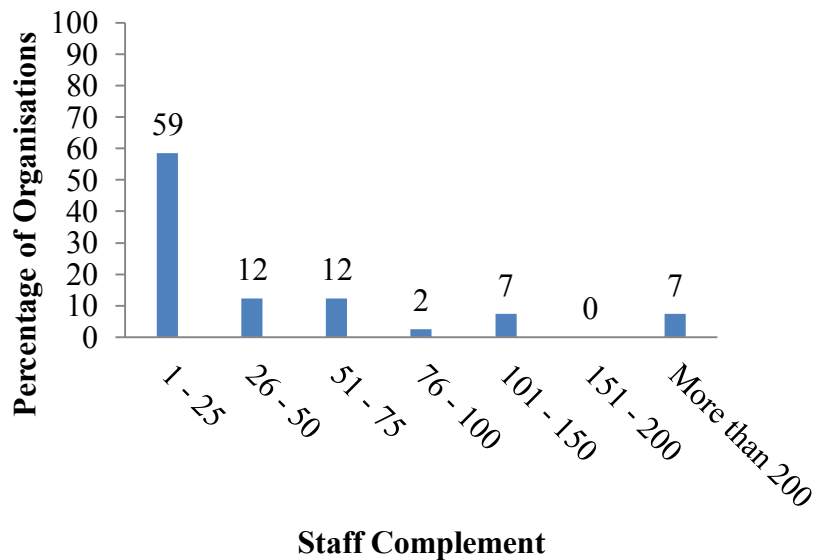
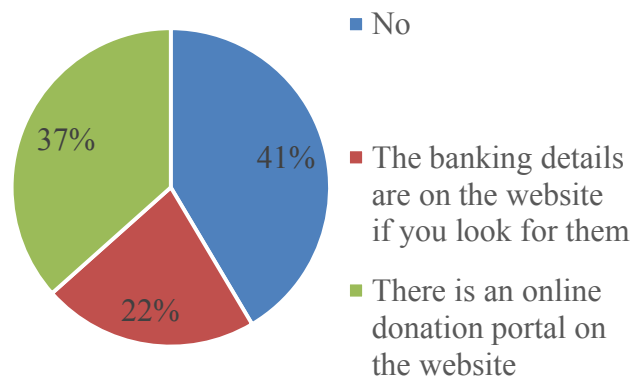


Figure 7: Organisational Staff Size

#### 4.2.6 Organisations using their Websites to Fundraise

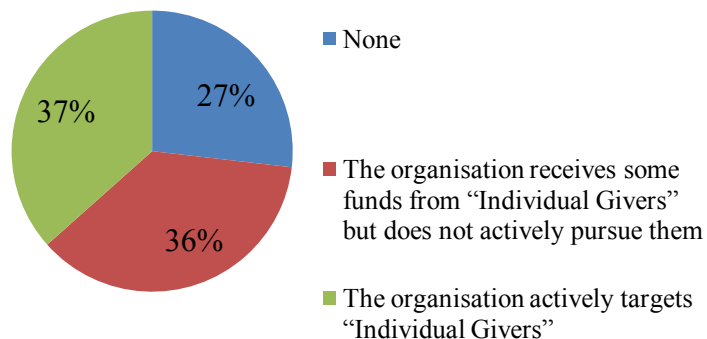
Forty-one percent (41%) of the respondent organisations do not actively use their website to fundraise, while 22% of the organisations use their websites passively and do list their banking details on the website which a visitor could find if they looked for it. Just over a third (37%) of the organisations use their website actively and have an online donation portal.



**Figure 8: Use of Websites as Fundraising Portals**

#### 4.2.7 Organisations Targeting Individual Givers

While just under a third (27%) of the organisations' fundraising strategies do not target Individual Givers, just over a third (36%) actively target Individual Givers. Interestingly the remaining third (37%) do not actively target Individual Givers but receive funds from this source regardless.



**Figure 9: Focus on Individual Givers**

#### 4.2.8 Proportion of Early Adopters Amongst the Organisations

The majority (46%) of the organisation perceive themselves as Early Adopters, and recognise value in first mover advantage. A further 32% admit that while being cautious they are very interested in the benefits offered by new technologies. Only 12% of the organisations describe themselves as being in a static and sedentary state when it comes to new technology adoption.



Figure 10: Early Adoption as Organisational Trait

#### 4.2.9 External Communications Practice

The majority (56%) of the organisations have an open communication culture which allows everyone to participate in external forums as an ambassador for the organisation. A

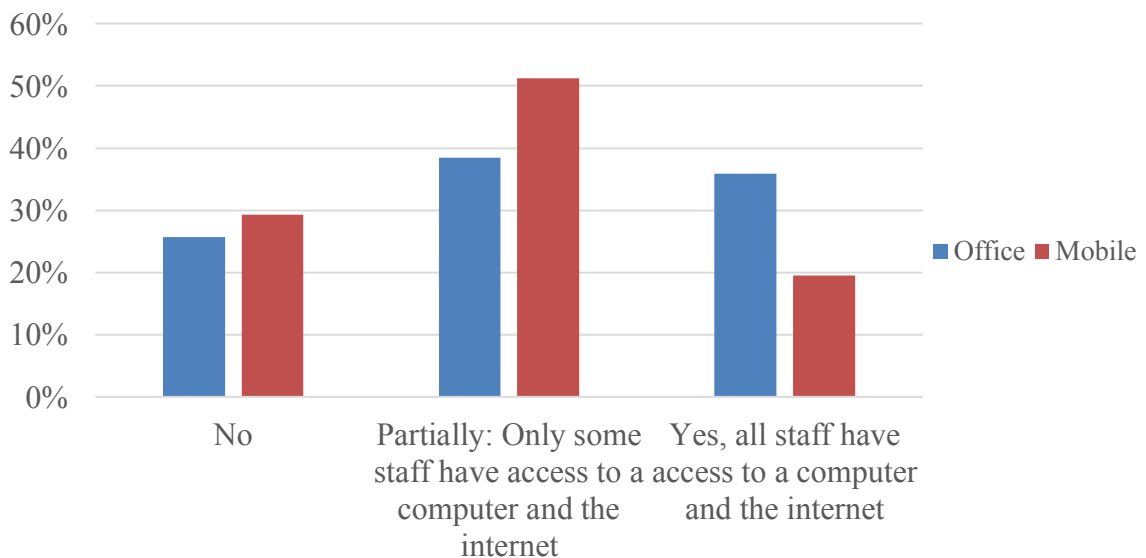
quarter (24%) of the organisations report having a rigid communications practice where only the most senior staff communicate externally.



**Figure 11: Communications Practice**

#### 4.2.10 Presence of ICT Infrastructure to Support Social Media in Organisations

A third (3%) of the organisations have office based computer and internet access for all staff. Only 20% of the organisations have mobile internet access available for all staff. Only 26% and 29% (respectively) of the organisations report having no office based or mobile internet access for their staff.



**Figure 12: ICT Infrastructure**

#### 4.2.11 Perception of the Ability of Social Media to Increase Fundraising Performance

When asked about whether they believed Social Media had the ability to improve the organisation’s fundraising performance the response was overwhelmingly positive with 88% responding in the promotor range of the Lickert Scale; and a total of 51% of the organisations selecting the most positive option on the scale.

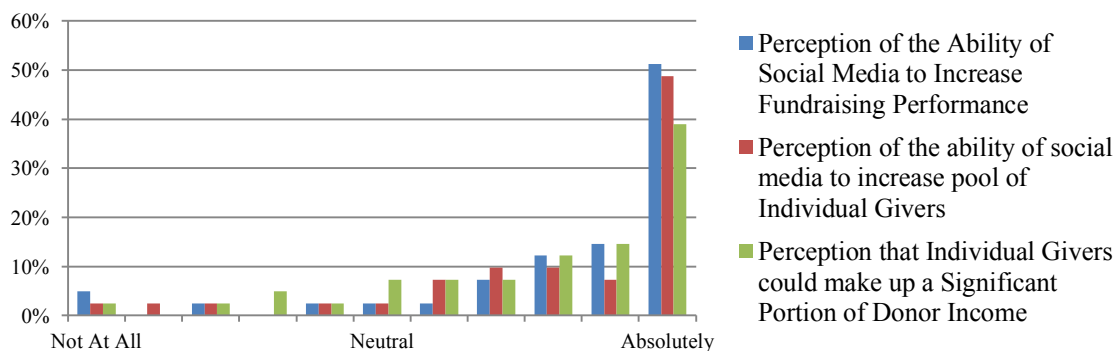
#### 4.2.12 Perception of the Ability of Social Media to Increase Pool of Individual Givers

Similarly, the survey revealed that many of the respondents believed Social Media has the ability to increase the organisation’s pool of Individual Givers. The responses were positive with 83% responding in the promoter range of the Lickert Scale; and a total of 49% of the organisations selecting the most positive option on the scale.

#### 4.2.13 Perception that Individual Givers could make up a Significant Portion of Donor Income

The survey results also show the existence of a strong perception that Individual Givers could be harnessed to make up a significant portion of donor income. The response, again, was overwhelmingly positive with 80% responding in the promoter range of the Lickert Scale; and a total of 39% of the organisations selecting the most positive option on the scale.

This positive trend in the perceptions of the role of social media and the individual givers as revealed through the above three survey items is captured in the graph below.



**Figure 13: Perceptions of the Role of Social Media and Individual Givers**

#### 4.2.14 Budget implication for instituting a Social Media Strategy

When asked about the extent of additional budget required to implement a social media fundraising strategy the responses were less dramatic in their distribution. 51% of organisations responded in the positive range indicating that any increase would not be significant, while 32% of the organisations' responses were in the distractor range which indicated the perception of a more significant budget increase being required.

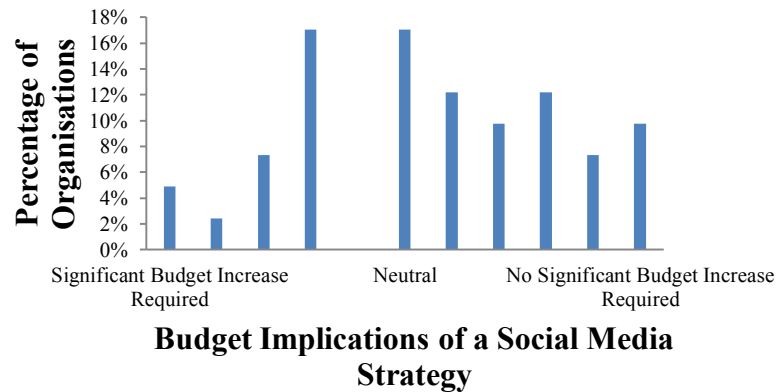


Figure 14: Cost of Implementing a Social Media Strategy

#### 4.3 The Fit-Viability Model

When the organisations characteristics are analysed and plotted on a Fit-Viability Matrix the relationship between variables which determine whether a social media fundraising strategy would be a good investment for an organisation become visibly comparable across organisations. Figure 15 demonstrates what course of action the different quadrants of the matrix suggest for whether an organisation should implement a social media fundraising strategy based on the fit and viability of such an initiative against an organisation's capacity, culture and other initiatives.

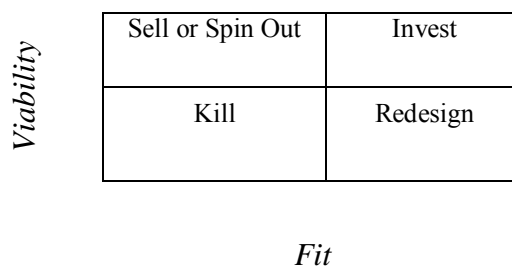
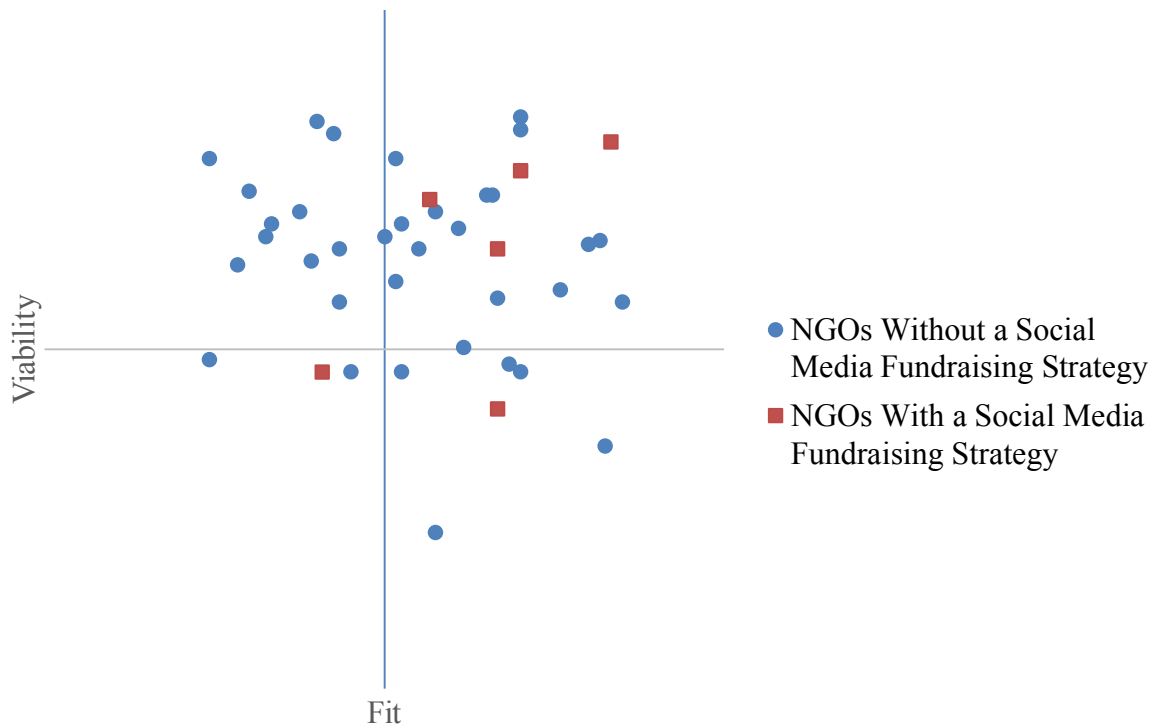


Figure 15: Fit-Viability Matrix Quadrants

Once plotted on the Fit-Viability Matrix it becomes evident that the majority (71%) of organisations already possess characteristics that make the implementation of a social media fundraising strategy a viable initiative to pursue. Slightly fewer organisations (66%) possess the characteristics that suggest that a social media fundraising initiative would present a good fit with existing organisational characteristics. However, it is the relationship between these two scores that determine the initiative’s position on the matrix. Just over half, 51%, of the organisations receive an “Invest” result for a social media fundraising initiative when key variables are submitted to the Fit-Viability Model. This means that, all things being equal, 51% of the organisations are in a position where they could objectively implement a social media fundraising initiative.



**Figure 16: Fit-Viability Matrix of Implementing a Social Media Fundraising Strategy for all Organisations**

#### 4.3.2 Organisations with a Social Media Fundraising Strategy on the Fit-Viability Matrix

In order to test the FVM analysis the performances of those organisations with a social media fundraising strategy on the matrix have been singled out with red markers. This

reveals that 67% of these organisations fall in the “Invest” quadrant when submitted to FVM analysis. This positioning indicates that these organisations’ decisions to implement a social media fundraising strategy would be justified and supported through them meeting objective criteria which would support the successful implementation of such a strategy. This is a correlation one would want to see for any organisation in any sector implementing a new initiative. Further, it could be taken as an indicator that the instrument is correctly calibrated and valid. The two “outliers” will be discussed in the following chapter.

#### 4.4 Hypothesis Testing of Salient Population Proportions

The literature and previous research point towards specific organisational traits or characteristics which are argued to be necessary to successfully adopt and implement a social media fundraising strategy. The data generated here allows the analysis to determine the proportion of organisations exhibiting a given trait which have a social media strategy. Hypothesis testing of population proportions can then be applied to determine if the difference between this proportion amongst organisations with a social media strategy and the proportion amongst organisations without a social media strategy is significant or explainable due to chance. The formula and approach to determining the significance of the difference was introduced in the Methodology chapter above.

##### 4.4.1 Early Adopters and Social Media Fundraising Strategies

Of those organisations with existing social media fundraising strategies, 83% are positioned on the highest point of the Early Adopter Scale, while only 40% of those organisations without locate themselves at this point of the scale.

**Table 8: Cross Tabulation of Early Adopter Behaviour and the Presence of a Social Media Fundraising Strategy**

<b>Organisation Characteristic</b>	Social Media Fundraising Strategy	No Social Media Fundraising Strategy	Total	Percentage of Organisations with a Social Media Fundraising Strategy
Strong Early Adopter	5	15	20	$p_1 = 0.025$



Weak to Non-Early Adopter	1	20	21	$p_0 = 0.048$
Total	6	35	41	

The results present a sample proportion in which 25% of the respondent organisations exhibiting early adopter behaviour have a social media fundraising strategy. Based on the literature one would assume organisations which exhibited early adopter behaviour would present a higher proportion of social media strategies than those organisations which didn't, 4,8%. In order to determine if these data provide convincing evidence that organisations scoring low on early adoption do not adopt social media fundraising strategies to the extent that high scoring organisations do, the data must be submitted to hypothesis testing for proportions.

$$H_0: p_0 - p_1 = 0$$

$$H_A: p_0 - p_1 > 0$$

$$CV: 1,645 (\alpha = 0.05)$$

$$Z = \frac{p_1 - p_0}{\sqrt{\frac{p_0(1-p_0)}{n}}}$$

$$Z = \frac{0,25 - 0,048}{\sqrt{\frac{0,048(1-0,048)}{21}}}$$

$$Z = 4.326$$

The result rejects the null hypothesis. There is sufficient evidence to suggest that the proportion of organisations with social media fundraising strategies is larger amongst organisations which exhibit early adopter behaviours as opposed to those organisations that do not.

#### 4.4.2 Social Media KPRs and Social Media Fundraising Strategy

Sixty-seven percent (67%) of the organisations with an existing social media fundraising strategy have a staff position with explicit social media KPRs as opposed to 40% of those organisations without an existing social media fundraising strategy.

**Table 9: Cross Tabulation of Presence of Social Media KPRs and the Presence of a Social Media Fundraising Strategy**

Organisation Characteristic	Social Media Fundraising Strategy	No Social Media Fundraising Strategy	Total	Percentage of Organisations with a Social Media Fundraising Strategy
Social Media as a KPR	4	14	18	$p_1 = 0.222$
No Social Media KPR	2	21	23	$p_0 = 0.087$
Total	6	35	41	

The results present a sample proportion in which 22% of the respondent organisations with social media as a key performance responsibility have a social media fundraising strategy. Based on the literature one would assume organisations which included social media in its KPRs would present a higher proportion of social media strategies than those organisations which did not, 8,7%. In order to determine if these data provide convincing evidence that organisations without social media included as a KPR do not adopt social media fundraising strategies to the extent that high scoring early adopters do the must be submitted to hypothesis testing for proportions.

$$H_0: p_0 - p_1 = 0$$

$$H_A: p_0 - p_1 > 0$$

$$CV: 1,645 (\alpha = 0.05)$$

$$Z = \frac{p_1 - p_0}{\sqrt{\frac{p_0(1-p_0)}{n}}}$$

$$Z = 2.298$$

This result rejects the null hypothesis. There is sufficient evidence to suggest that the proportion of organisations with social media fundraising strategies is larger amongst organisations which have social media management incorporated in their KPRs as opposed to those that don't.

#### 4.4.4 Communication Practices and Social Media Fundraising Strategy

The results show that 16% of the respondent organisations with an open communication culture have social media fundraising strategies as opposed to 10% of the organisations

which have closed communication cultures. In order to determine if this is a significant or chance difference these data will also be submitted to hypothesis testing for proportions.

**Table 10: Cross Tabulation of Communication Culture and the Presence of a Social Media Fundraising Strategy**

Organisation Characteristic	Social Media Fundraising Strategy	No Social Media Fundraising Strategy	Total	Percentage of Organisations with a Social Media Fundraising Strategy
Open Communication Culture	5	26	31	$p_1 = 0.161$
Closed Communication Culture	1	9	10	$p_0 = 0.10$
Total	6	35	41	

$$H_0: p_0 - p_1 = 0$$

$$H_A: p_0 - p_1 > 0$$

CV: 1,645 ( $\alpha = 0.05$ )

$$Z = \frac{p_1 - p_0}{\sqrt{\frac{p_0(1-p_0)}{n}}}$$

$$Z = 0.643$$

The data fails to reject the null hypothesis. There is insufficient evidence to suggest that the proportion of organisations with social media fundraising strategies is larger amongst organisations with open communication cultures as opposed to those organisations with closed communications cultures.

#### 4.5 Summary

The data reveals that although only 15% of organisations have a social media fundraising strategy 51% possess attributes that position them to invest in such an initiative. Beyond this key descriptive statistic and Fit-Viability analysis there are other variables which suggest adoption and implementation of social media fundraising strategies should be higher than they are. These include variables which explore: expected monetary returns from, and capacity to, implement such a strategy. Finally, the significance of organisational traits on the presence of a social media fundraising strategy have been interrogated. This will be explored and discussed further in the following chapter.

## **Chapter 5: Discussion of Findings**

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### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter provides a discussion of the research findings presented in the previous chapter. The results are interpreted and explained here against the backdrop of previous research discussed in the literature review. This allows the findings of this study to corroborate or refute previous research findings, or provide new perspectives, and make a meaningful contribution to the broader body of research in this field. Further to building on what has come before it also provides a framework within which future research can be conducted. The fact that this study also made use of an existing model (the Fit-Viability Model) provides an opportunity to compare the use and applicability of the model in different research settings.

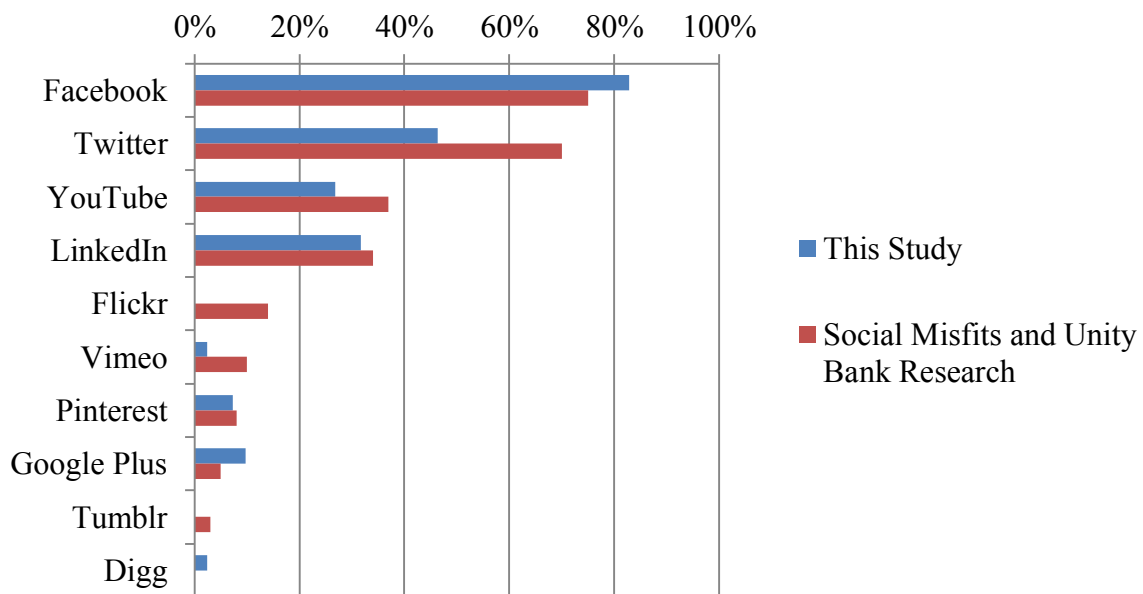
This discussion engages the research question as a whole, while some of the results are discussed in the order presented in the previous chapter, an integrated approach is required to appreciate how the survey elements as a whole give more insight than the sum of its parts.

### **5.2 The Role of Social Media as a Fundraising Tool**

Pillay's (2012) research found that 7.8% civil society organisations are using social media as a fundraising tool. This low representation is supported by the findings of this study which revealed only 15% of the sample had a social media fundraising strategy. This is surprising, given that the findings discussed below describe a sample where 83% of the respondent organisations have a social media presence and 51% meet the criteria of fit and viability to successfully implement a social media strategy. It is further surprising that a sector facing a funding contraction and which is increasingly competing for online donations (Treiblmaier & Pollach, 2006, p. 809) is not exploiting a freely accessible resource which can increase their ability to not only communicate their message to a larger audience but to also build relationships and trust with this audience; and consolidate existing revenue streams and ultimately mobilise new revenue streams.

### 5.3 Social Media Platforms being used by NGOs in KwaZulu-Natal

The distribution of organisational presence across different social media platforms revealed that the majority of the organisations (83%) have a presence on at least one social media platform. This taken into account with the fact that the only 15% of the organisations in the sample have a social media fundraising strategy resonates with the findings of research conducted in the United Kingdom (Social Misfits Media and Unity Trust Bank, 2012) where it was found that despite a high proportion of organisations having a social media presence, very few of them were integrating this with their broader fundraising efforts. In addition to this congruence between the two studies the distribution of organisational presence across social media platforms in the two studies is markedly similar, with both studies sharing not only the top 4 social media platforms, but also sharing the same first and second most represented social media platforms (Instagram was not included in the comparison as it was not included as an item in the Social Misfits and Unity Bank research). This similarity is captured in the graph below.



**Figure 17: Distribution Organisational Presence Across Social Media Platforms**

Kothandaraman, *et al.* (2012) discuss how different social media platforms support pull or push strategies. Where push strategies drive user generated content out through the social media platforms to create networks; examples of this are Facebook and LinkedIn.

Pull strategies are content enabling and invite, entice or pull the audience towards user generated content. Organisation websites, specific pages in these, and Facebook profiles are prime examples of user generated content. Social media that facilitate pull strategies include blogs and micro-blogs. Twitter would be the leading example of a social media platform that facilitates a pull strategy (Kothandaraman, et al., 2012).

What is interesting from looking at the organisational presence across Facebook and Twitter is that the organisations in this study are placing almost twice as much emphasis (83% to 46% presence respectively) on push enabling social media platforms as they are on pull enabling social media platforms. While the rank order of representation between this and the Social Misfits Media and Unity Bank research is almost identical, the difference between organisational presence on Facebook (push) and Twitter (pull) in the Social Misfits Media and Unity Bank study is far less marked at 75% to 70% respectively. While this research cannot explain the reason for, or the outcomes of this difference, it poses the question of whether a successful social media strategy requires a greater balance between push and pull strategies? Too much emphasis on push strategies may lead to a social media platform being used as a proxy for a Web 1.0 presence where content is static and communication is uni-directional as in the case with other forms of “old media” (Singh, et al., 2012). While this research was not investigating this question the emphasis on push social media may suggest that the full benefits and potential of social media platforms as “new media” are not being implemented and may not be fully understood. This resonates with the Social Misfit Media and Unity Bank suggestion that the will to use social media is there, but the understanding is not.

#### **5.4 The Alignment of Current Fundraising Streams and a Need for Social Media**

Individual Givers are reported in joint position with the South African Government as a primary income stream for the respondent organisations. Further to this 37% of the respondent organisations report they actively target individual givers. A further 36% receive donations from individual givers without actively targeting them. If, as Bakeman and Hanson (2012) claim, social media presents a comparatively cheap way to reach a receptive audience via interactive and on-going communication that mimics word-of-mouth promotion, the fact that only 15% of the respondent organisations are implementing social media strategies points to an area where these organisations can consolidate and

build upon their pool of individual givers. The discussion below examines what role infrastructural or competency issues may play in understanding why these organisations are not implementing social media strategies.

### **5.5 Evidence that Organisations Recognise Social Media as a Performance Responsibility**

With only 15% of the organisations having a social media fundraising strategy it is surprising to see that 44% of the respondent organisations report to have a staff position with social media as a key performance responsibility (KPR). Surprising, because the absence of a social media fundraising strategy suggests that the holders of the social media portfolio, or the organisation as a whole, may not understand the full potential of social media, or how to articulate it as a strategic fundraising tool. Again this resonates with the Social Misfits Media and Unity Bank (2012) research findings that suggest that despite having social media presence organisations are not integrating it strategically with broader fundraising activities.

The relationship between this variable and the presence of a social media fundraising strategy also deserves closer analysis. The literature asserts that the presence of social media as a key performance responsibility would increase the likelihood that an organisation would have a social media fundraising strategy. The results revealed that 22% of the respondent organisations with social media as a key performance responsibility have a social media fundraising strategy, while just under 9% of the organisations without this KPR has such strategies. In order to determine that this difference is significant and not due to chance the data was selected to hypothesis testing for proportions. The results of the hypothesis test revealed that there is sufficient evidence to suggest that the proportion of organisations with social media fundraising strategies is larger amongst organisations which have social media management incorporated in their KPRs as opposed to those that don't.

### **5.6 The Extent to Which Respondent Organisations are Using their Websites to Fundraise**

Just over a third, 37%, of the respondent organisations used their websites actively as a fundraising tool by having an online donation portal embedded in it. The literature

examined in Chapter Two, above, described our social media can be used to both direct increased and new traffic to a website; as well as how social media can be used to build relationships and trust with an audience. These two functions of social media have the potential to support and greatly improve the efficacy of online donation portals. When a cross-tabulation is run it is revealed that only 13% of the respondent organisations with an online donation portal have a social media fundraising strategy. This points to existing initiatives which would benefit immediately from the introduction of a supporting social media fundraising strategy. Ultimately, this points to unrealised potential of existing efforts in the absence of a social media fundraising strategy.

In conjunction to this finding Treiblmaier and Pollach (2006) report that despite the potential offered by actively fundraising through the website many organisations' mainstay donors may never actually visit its website. This underscores the value that social media could provide through pull strategies to consolidate existing resources, and generate new traffic through their websites and other user generated content.

## **5.7 Early Adoption**

Of the respondent organisations 78% either consider themselves outright or cautious early adopters. But the fact that only 15% of the respondent organisations have a social media fundraising strategy suggests that "adoption" does not necessitate strategic use, and as found in the Social Misfits and Unity Bank (2012) study it would suggest that the will to utilise social media is present, but the understanding to implement it is absent.

The analysis of this variable goes further. The literature suggests that organisations with a strong score as an early adopter would have a higher proportion of social media fundraising strategies amongst them than would organisations which do not exhibit early adopter characteristics. The results showed the 25% of the respondent organisation which fell into the category of "strong early adopter" were implementing social media fundraising strategies, while just under 5% of those organisations with weak or no early adopter characteristics were implementing such a strategy. In order to test the significance of this difference and rule out that it is due to chance the data was submitted to hypothesis testing for proportions. The results of the hypothesis show that there is sufficient evidence to suggest that the proportion of organisations with social media fundraising strategies is larger amongst organisations which exhibit early adopter behaviours as opposed to those



organisations that do not. This finding supports the assertions of the existing literature on the subject.

## **5.8 External Communications Practice**

The research found that 56% of the sample had an open external communications culture, whereby all tiers of staff are able to participate as ambassadors of the organisation on different platforms to external audiences. This characteristic is an enabler for the adoption and implementation of a social media fundraising strategy, as unwillingness or fear to engage in public two-way communication where the conversation cannot be controlled or scripted has been identified by previous research as being a contributing factor to senior-management not buying into the implementation of social media based strategies (Kantner & Fine, 2010). Just under a quarter (24%) of the organisations in the study reported a rigid and closed external communication culture, according to previous research, this characteristic would need to be addressed in order for the organisation to implement a social media strategy. However, when this characteristic is analysed against whether an organisation has a social media fundraising strategy the results are contrary to the existing literature, and discussed below. Of all the organisations without a social media fundraising strategy only 26% report a rigid or closed external communication culture. While the body of research would expect this characteristic to be present in the majority of organisations without a social media strategy the fact that it only accounts for a quarter of the organisations suggests that other variables are also playing a role in determining whether an organisation implements a social media fundraising strategy or not. More surprising is that 17% of the organisations with social media fundraising strategies reported to have a rigid external communications culture, which is wholly contrary to the literature.

In order to explore whether this observed difference in the sample was significant and not due to chance the results were submitted to a hypothesis test for proportions. The results of this showed there was insufficient evidence to suggest that the proportion of organisations with social media fundraising strategies is larger amongst organisations with open communication cultures as opposed to those organisations with closed communications cultures. This finding stands in opposition to the literature and suggests the presence of

confounding variables which influence the relationship between communication culture and social media adoption.

### **5.9 The Presence of Requisite ICT Infrastructure to Support a Social Media Strategy**

The bare minimum requirement to implement a social media strategy is a computer or smart phone and a connection to the internet. In this survey 26% of the organisations reported that they didn't have sufficient ITC resources to allow for active and frequent social media engagement. This is a problematic response in light of the fact that the respondents were completing the survey online. The problem must ultimately arise from the survey item including the undefined descriptors; "active" and "frequent". These terms are open to a variety of interpretations and ultimately do not allow the study to determine one way or the other if these organisations are objectively impaired due to infrastructural limitations.

On the other end of this spectrum 36% of the organisations in the study reported that all of their office based staff had computer and internet access. A further 38% of organisations report that while they don't have computers and internet access for all office based staff they do have these resources available to "some" staff. These 38% still meet the bare minimum infrastructural requirements to support a social media strategy. Considering the above, at least 74% of the organisations in the study have the ITC infrastructure to engage on social media platforms.

### **5.10 Perceptions of the Benefits of Social Media and the Individual Giver for Fundraising**

The results show that over 80% of the organisations in the study believe that social media can increase fundraising effectiveness generally and in terms of focussed fundraising strategies aimed at Individual Givers. Further to this 83% of the organisations also believe that Individual Givers, as a class of donor if harnessed successfully, could make up a significant portion of all donor income. These findings stand in contrast to other research of South African NGOs in which only 32.8% believed that social media could be of some benefit towards fundraising, and only 15.3% believed that social media held more significance as a fundraising tool than traditional methods (Pillay, 2012). When this belief in the benefit of social media is expressed it stands in stark contrast to fact that only 15%

of the same organisations report having a social media fundraising strategy. The relationship between these two characteristics of the study organisations again resonates with the findings of the Social Misfits and Unity Bank study. This could suggest that organisations are not using social media strategically due to lack of will, but rather due to lack of skills, time or understanding (Social Misfits Media and Unity Trust Bank, 2012).

### **5.11 Budget Constraints to Implementing a Social Media Strategy**

More than half (51%) of the organisation reported that no significant budget increase would be required to implement a social media strategy, while a third (32%) indicated that there would be budget implications for the implementation of a social media strategy. This again suggests that more organisations possess the infrastructural characteristics to support a social media strategy than are currently implementing.

### **5.12 Analysis of Organisations using the Fit-Viability Model**

As presented in the previous chapter 51% of the organisations had their Fit-Viability score plotted in the “Invest” quadrant of the Fit-Viability Matrix. That is, they possess the core characteristics to implement the initiative, and have an expectation of return from the initiative which would suggest they could invest successfully in a social media fundraising strategy. This result when compared to the proportion of organisations with a social media fundraising strategy (15%) depicts a sample where far more organisations are in a position to implement a social media fundraising strategy than are actually implementing. This reinforces what the discussion above has been suggesting as well as the research undertaken by Social Misfits and Unity Bank. That is, these organisations are not implementing a social media strategy due to a lack of will or perceived viability. The Social Misfits and Unity Bank research suggests that the reason may rather be lack of skills, time or understanding (Social Misfits Media and Unity Trust Bank, 2012). The finding of the Fit-Viability analysis, however, reveals that skills or core competencies are present in these organisations, as well as infrastructure and other enabling organisational characteristics. What the Fit-Viability analysis does not tell us is why the majority of these organisations that are plotted in the “Invest” quadrant are not implementing a social media fundraising strategy.

### **5.13 Adaptability of the Fit-Viability Model to this Research Question**

The seminal article (Tjan, 2001) was describing a tool which a single organisation could use to make an objective decision on which new initiatives to implement when faced with a range of potential options. In this study it was used to determine which organisations in a sample should implement a single initiative (a social media fundraising strategy) if they were to apply the Fit-Viability Model to their decision making. Where the seminal article describes a Fit-Viability Matrix that maps and compares the relative fit and viability of multiple initiatives for a single organisation, this study has collated the fit and viability results from a sample of organisations from a specific sector onto one matrix to understand the fit and viability of an initiative for that sector as a whole.

While the limitations of the survey design are discussed above, the Fit-Viability Model has proven easily adaptable to this shift of scope. This ease of adaptability is due to the logic and mechanics of the model not having to be altered or manipulated; the results of multiple analyses are merely collated onto a single matrix.

#### **5.13.1 Broader Applicability of Adapted Fit-Viability Analysis**

The adapted Fit-Viability Model would be useful when decisions are required that have implications for the performance of an entire sector. This would make the adapted model a useful tool for policy makers and any central coordinating structures which advise on strategy at a sector-wide level.

### **5.14 Summary**

Intrigued by Pillay's (2012) findings that few NGOs were using social media as a fundraising tool, and how little value it was perceived to lend to fundraising, this study set out to understand the role of social media in the fundraising strategies of South African NGOs. The results depict a situation where 83% of the organisations have a social media profile and just over half the organisations in the study meet the requirements of a Fit-Viability analysis to successfully implement a social media fundraising strategy. The individual descriptive statistics also suggest that more than 15% of the organisations have the enabling characteristics (either in terms of infrastructure or organisation behaviour) that would support a social media strategy. On the face of it this could be taken to refute

Pillay's assertion that only a few NGOs were using social media as a fundraising tool. However, only 15% of the organisations are actually implementing a social media based fundraising strategy, which is closer to Pillay's findings.

The findings of this research do not wholesale support Pillay's (2012) findings. Where Pillay's research reports that the sector perceived social media to lend very little value to fundraising the results of this study present a very different picture with over 80% of the respondents scoring in the promoter range (above a neutral score) when reporting their perceptions on a Likert Scale. This difference could, however, be attributed to the larger scale and wider scope of Pillay's study which examined 1712 civil society organisations from across the country as opposed to the smaller sample drawn from a single province in this study.

Through submitting key data to hypothesis testing the study was able to test the significance of relationships which influence the presence of social media fundraising strategies. The findings supported the literature assertions that the presence of specific social media KPRs in an organisation, and early adopter behaviour positively correlate with the presence of a social media strategy in an organisation. The literatures' suggestion that a significant relationship existed between organisational communication behaviour and the presence of a social media fundraising strategy was rejected by the hypothesis testing; there was insufficient evidence to suggest that this relationship was due to anything more than chance in this sample.

The question that remains unanswered moving forward is why, given all of the above, so few organisations are implementing a social media fundraising strategy. Research conducted on NGOs in the United Kingdom revealed a similar dissonance between having a social media presence and actual strategic integration of social media into their fundraising activities (Social Misfits Media and Unity Trust Bank, 2012). Where they suggest this lack of strategic engagement is not due to lack of will but rather a lack of time, skills or understanding the results of the Fit-Viability analysis suggest that a lack of skill and time cannot be the reason for the majority of the 51% plotted in the "Invest" quadrant not implementing a social media fundraising strategy.

While one could tenuously argue through a process of elimination that a lack of understanding could be the reason for organisations not engaging social media strategically

there is not enough evidence from the data collected under this research design to confirm that hypothesis.

In the final analysis, although many of the organisations have a social media presence and organisational attributes to support a social media fundraising strategy; social media plays a limited role in South African NGOs' fundraising strategies. Before presenting the conclusion the following chapter discusses the implications of these findings, the limitations of this research, and recommendations for future research.

## **Chapter 6: Recommendations and Conclusions**

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### **6.1 Introduction**

Based on the presentation and discussion of the results this chapter will discuss the outcome of the research against the study objectives, and the implications of the findings. This will be followed by recommendations on how the research problem can be constructively and practically engaged and recommendations for future research of the issue based on the findings and limitations experienced from this research design.

### **6.2 Answering the Research Question**

This study set out to determine the role of social media in South African NGOs' fundraising strategies. In order to achieve this, data on organisational characteristics were collected and submitted to a descriptive statistical analysis as well an analysis using Tjan's (2001) Fit-Viability Model. Although the results show many of the organisations have a social media presence and organisational attributes to support a social media fundraising strategy; social media plays a limited role in South African NGOs' fundraising strategies. What remains unanswered is what are the obstacles to the strategic integration of social media to these organisations' fundraising activities?

### **6.3 Implications of this Research**

One of the most striking findings of the research is that the majority of the organisations that pass the Fit-Viability analysis for the implementation of a social media strategy are not implementing a strategy. While the research framework was not designed to test whether organisations have a working understanding of social media the discussion of results points to this being a question for investigation. These two items should be most significant for the sample organisations when the findings are shared with them. In the first instance those participating organisations which aren't implementing a social media strategy despite meeting the Fit-Viability criteria will now be prompted to have the conversation as to why they don't have a social media strategy, and perhaps even the confidence to embark on the new initiative. In the second instance, while this research cannot conclusively comment whether a lack of understanding may be an obstacle, all

those organisations with a social media presence will now be prompted to interrogate their understanding and implementation of social media from the perspective of “new media”.

## **6.4 Recommendations**

With the results showing that many of the organisation already have the core attributes to implement a social media strategy the primary recommendation of this study would be social media education for the NGO sector. Areas for education would need to address the detail of the following broad areas:

- Social media as “new media” – the differences between traditional and new media.
- Understanding the difference between push and pull social media platforms and the how best to get them to leverage of each other.
- Setting clear goals and performance metrics for your social media strategy.
- Case studies of international best practice of NGO Social Media Initiatives.
- How to communicate the social media strategy and objectives to internal and external stakeholders and gain buy-in.
- The establishment of a community of practice where organisations can find and offer support in a reflective and continual learning environment.

### **6.4.1 Knowledge Generation Required to Strengthen the Recommendations to Solve the Research Problem**

The following research initiatives would enrich the content and delivery of the recommendations made above and ultimately the sustainability of the non-profit sector. These are introduced below:

- Research into how Individual Givers, Donor Foundations, Corporate CSI Portfolios, Domestic and Foreign Governments use and engage with social media to determine the nature and recipients of their donations.
- A digital-ethnography of organisations’ online social media profiles to understand how NGOs are conducting themselves on these virtual platforms. As has already been expressed the NGO sector is heterogeneous, and the micro-ethnographic approach allows the researcher to present and analyse multiple vignettes from multiple subjects; across examples of good and poor practice. This will allow case-



studies to be presented back to NGOs to act as a mirror of their own practice, and a guide to improved practice.

## **6.5 Limitations of the Research**

All research sets out to answer a question, or to better understand a problem so that a question can be formulated. Answers are an output, and the limitations in any research generally have their root in the formulation of the question, or the methodologies employed to pursue the question. Due to the limited information available around this study's research problem an exploratory approach was adopted in order to better understand the phenomenon.

### **6.5.1 Sampling**

As discussed in Chapter Three the more representative the sample the more generalizable the results of the research are to the whole population (Sekaran & Bougie, 2009, p. 278). Due to the exploratory nature of the study and the characteristics of the population under study a purposive non-probability sampling design was selected. While this limits the generalizability of the results to the entire population it is a recognised way to obtain preliminary information on a topic in a timely and inexpensive manner (Sekaran & Bougie, 2009, p. 276).

### **6.5.2 Questionnaire Design**

Due to the paucity of existing information on the subject an exploratory approach was adopted to better understand the phenomenon. Through the analysis the scope of the research problem became better defined and unforeseeable blind spots or ambiguities in the questionnaire design became apparent; these are discussed below.

#### **6.5.2.1 Early Adoption**

Unfortunately "adoption" does not inherently indicate whether the new technology is merely being "used" or whether it is being "strategically used". This questionnaire item and its subsequent analysis would have benefitted from the issue being better defined and teased out.

### **6.5.2.2 Communication Culture**

The survey item describing a communications culture which is centrally directed by senior management could describe an organisation with a strategic and rigorously administered social media initiative as well as an organisation with a closed and bureaucratic communications culture which impedes social media adoption. The latter interpretation was the one intended by this study. This potential ambiguity could impact the accuracy of the Fit-Viability Analysis as the intended interpretation would negatively impact an organisation's "Fit" score.

### **6.5.2.3 Organisation Budget Implications**

The data generated by the questionnaire here limits the studies ability to determine without assumptions where the perceived costs may lie between infrastructural or human resource costs. Further to this the current operating budgets of these organisations was not collected, thus what determines a "significant" budget implication is a matter of context and absolute costs could vary significantly.

### **6.5.2.4 Testing "Understanding" of what Social Media is**

While the survey items for the Fit-Viability analysis probed many items pertinent to the implementation of a social media strategy, it at no stage made provision to test the organisations understanding of social media within the broader context of "new media" as discussed by (Singh, et al., 2012) in the literature review. Nor did the survey items evaluate the efficacy of the *how* current social media presence was being managed, or whether the staff key performance responsibilities (KPRs) linked to social media revealed an understanding of managing a social media portfolio from a "new media" perspective.

## **6.6 Recommendations for Future Research**

The results showed that social media was playing a limited role in the way South African NGOs are fundraising, but the reasons for this being the case were not clear. With so many organisations having the potential to implement a social media strategy future research needs to include an investigation into how NGOs are using social media and why NGOs

aren't implementing a social media strategy. This will help to refine the design and delivery of social media education recommended above.

Some of the existing survey elements could be refined based on the experiences of this study. Existing survey items could be reworded or additional survey elements could be added to support the interpretation of the responses to the existing core items in this study. Examples of these issues which became apparent in the discussion of results are given below:

- When organisations are describing themselves as “early adopters” does “adoption” refer merely to acquisition of the technology, or the strategic use thereof?
- When organisations report that they have a rigid external communication practice that is controlled by senior management further survey items need to be included to determine whether this rigidity is due to management practices tied to traditional media where content is controlled and communication uni-directional, or whether this rigidity may be alluding to the presence of a structured and tightly coordinated social media strategy which sits in the portfolios of senior staff?
- The value offered by a social media fundraising strategy in this study is measured according to respondents' perceptions. If a complimentary quantitative study could be conducted to objectively determine the survey elements which measured perceptions the results across organisations would be more accurately comparable, and the Fit-Viability analysis more robust. Were this information available it would also offer a third dimension to the study whereby perceptions of the value-add of social media could be compared to the objective data. This third dimension would better help the study to determine the depth of social media understanding possessed by the organisations.
- If the survey item on the budget implications of implementing a social media strategy could be quantified and analysed against the back-drop of individual organisations' current operating budgets the interpretation of the results could be conducted in a more articulate and detailed manner. As above, this would also increase the robustness and accuracy of the Fit-Viability analysis.
- If the study could draw a larger probability sample from the national population the results would be more robust, and the opportunity would be created to submit the

data to more rigorous statistical analyses and the opportunity to identify where statistically significant relationships between variables exist.

## **6.7 Conclusion**

This study set out to explore the role of social media as a fundraising tool in South African NGOs. Through collecting data on a sample of NGOs, analysing descriptive statistics generated by the data and submitting the data to analysis by Tjan's (2001) Fit-Viability model it has succeeded in producing a more nuanced delineation of the research area and a greater understanding of issues around social media uptake in NGOs and the organisational characteristics which impact the uptake and implementation of social media strategies.

The most salient finding was that despite only 15% of the sample currently having a social media fundraising strategy the fit-viability analysis revealed that 51% of the respondent organisations possessed the inherent capacity and capabilities to successfully implement a social media fundraising strategy. Further to this through hypothesis testing for significance in cross-tabulated relationships this study corroborated existing literature through showing a significant positive correlation between both organisations that have a specific KPR related to social media, and organisations which exhibit early adopter behaviour to an organisations implementation of a social media fundraising strategy. Through similar hypothesis testing this study did not find sufficient evidence for a significant relationship to support the literature's assertion that organisations with closed communication cultures are less likely to adopt a social media fundraising strategy than organisations with open communication cultures.

In the final analysis the data is pointing towards more organisations possessing the core capacities and capabilities to implement a social media fundraising strategy than are actually implementing. While the discussion suggests that a lack of understanding of what social media is, and how to strategically implement it, further research has been recommended to address these knowledge gaps and more fully understand what the reasons behind the low levels of implementation.

Given the findings of this study the recommended solution is built around educating the NGO sector on social media within the context of Web 2.0, as well as initiatives aimed at

building a greater understanding of how NGO's and their key stakeholders and potential donors engage with social media to inform and enrich the content of the "education" recommended above.

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17 January 2014

Mr Thorin M Roberts (991234736)  
Graduate School of Business & Leadership  
Westville Campus

Protocol reference number: HSS/1175/013M  
Project title: The role of social media as a fund raising tool in South African NGOs

Dear Mr Roberts,

**Retrospective – Expedited Approval / Amendment**

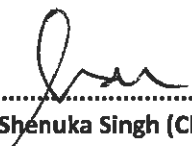
With regards to your application for ethical clearance and notification of the change(s) to the research methodology. The documents submitted have been accepted by the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee and **FULL APPROVAL** for the protocol has been granted.

**Any further violation of the UKZN Code of Ethical Conduct will result in a disciplinary process.**

**Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number. Please note: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.**

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully

  
.....  
Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)

/ms

Cc Supervisor: Professor Manoj Maharaj  
cc Academic Leader Research: Dr E Munapo  
cc School Administrator: Ms Zarina Bullyraj

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**Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee**

**Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)**

**Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building**

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