Analysis of the Effects of Use of Social Media on Work Performance at the Harare City Council

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Abstract
This study explored the effects of social media website use on worker productivity at Harare City Council. The investigation was underpinned by the desire to find out the link between social media use and productivity. We sought to establish the effect of social media on productive time, identify factors that contribute to use of social media platforms at workplace and determine the types of social media platforms popularly in use at Harare City. Stratified random sampling was used where a sample size of 300 employees were drawn from ten departments within Harare City. Three hundred questionnaires were distributed and a total of 180 responses was realised. The results indicated that WhatsApp is most used by Harare City Council employees during working hours. The employees use social media for various socio-economic and psychological reasons as well as religious, work and business-related activities. It was also noted that WhatsApp reduces productive time of employees at Harare City while use of Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter has very low effect on the amount of time spent on useful work. The following recommendations are proffered: Harare City Council may need to consider implementing a social media use policy to regulate the use and application of social media at work. In addition, the growing use of WhatsApp may provide an opportunity for the Council to incorporate such social media into formal channels of communication in order to educate, train and inform its employees on pertinent work-related and social issues that may affect employees.

Key words: Social media, Productivity

Introduction

Social media allows easy and fast transfer of files, pictures, videos, creation of blogs and sending of messages among other things and has become the preferred method of information exchange. This virtual engagement sometimes takes much of the worker's productive time and can negatively affect total company production. This study sought to interrogate the impact of social media on the performance of Harare City Council which provides services to an estimated total population of about 2.1 million people. The performance of the Harare City Council in the form of service delivery, sanitation, amenities, accommodation and housing, water and sewage management, and general utilities has been a topical issue since the late 90s (Mangiza, 2012). Many authors have suggested that corruption, poor management practices, lack of good governance and the economic turmoil in the country are the problems affecting the City. However, some authors, Hove and Tirimboi (2011) and Marongwe (2003) have argued that worker productivity is the key to transforming the City into success and prosperity. Recent studies by Aguenza, Al-Kassem, and Som (2012); Brown (2011); Ashraf and Javed (2014) have suggested that the emerging social websites have changed the way workers perform at work. Social media connects people to create a vibrant virtual community that unlocks higher social interactions. Social media are those on-line social platforms that enable buddies and co-workers to exchange files, videos, create blogs and networks and these include Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, Twoo and Badoo among others and they are a faster means of communication (Ashrad and Javed, 2014). According to Sarrel (2010) and Tarip, Mehboob, Khan, and Ullah (2012) employers are beginning to use social media for recruitment while employees use social media in the workplace to develop business and commercial relationships. Employees are keen to use social media to foster more collegiate environment. Unfortunately, Swartz (2010) notes that while many authors cite positive use of social media at work place, there is growing evidence that employees misuse social media at or outside of work to the disadvantage of their employer. Furthermore, literature is awash with cases of employees who have been dismissed after posting inappropriate comments about colleagues or their employer. Similar such cases have been reported at Harare City Council where employees have misused social media such as WhatsApp and Facebook to abuse other workers, post negative comments about their management and anonymously complained of gross corruption in the City (Hove & Tirimboi, 2011). Current literature conveys inconclusive statements about the nature and extent of the effect of social media on worker productivity (Ferreira and du Plessis, 2009; Ashrad and Javed, 2014).

Theoretical framework

Literature on social media and its relationship with worker performance formed the majority of scholarly work reviewed. Particular interest was on the percentage of work time spend on social media, the benefits and disadvantages of social media, usefulness and advantages of the use of social media with regard to worker performance. Worker performance variables such as

worker productivity, work time, output and efficiency factors are considered. The review also examined the relationship between social media use and worker performance. The Uses and Gratification Theory and the Performance Theory underpinned the study and understanding of the underlying factors and rationale for use of social media by Harare City Council workers.

Uses and Gratification Theory (UGT)
A framework to understand why and how users actively consider specific social media to meet specific needs is generally referred to as Uses and Gratification Theory (UGT). According to Lim & Ting (2012) UGT is a functionalist theory developed in the 1940s in an attempt to understand what people do with internet and why. The motivations and concerns for users are better explained from UGT than most other mass media communication theories. Early researchers of UGT have attempted to explain user motivations by analysing the psychological and behavioural patterns of users (Roy, 2008). One of the early such aspect identified is the interactivity inherent in online services such as social media. The increase in interactivity of most internet services has strengthened the potency of the UG theory. Generally, Gaal (2015) depicted that the value and importance of UGT has followed an exponential path as exhibited in Table 1.

Table 1: Selected media uses and gratifications typologies 1983-2011

Author (s) and years	Medium	Uses and gratifications typologies
Rubin (1983)	Television	Entertainment, pass time, escape, information, companionship
Payne et al. (1998)	Magazine	Diversion, surveillance, interaction
O'Keefe and Sulanowski (1995)	Telephone	Entertainment, sociability, acquisition, time management
Kaye (1998)	The Internet	Entertainment, pass time, escape, social interaction, information, website preference
Papacharissi and Rubin (2000)	The Internet	Entertainment, pass time, interpersonal utility, information seeking, convenience
Ferguson and Perse (2000)	TV related web surfing	Entertainment, pass time, relaxation, social information
Leung (2001)	Instant messaging	Entertainment, affection, relaxation, fashion, inclusion, sociability, escape
Stafford and Stafford (2001)	The Internet	Entertainment, search factor, cognitive factor, news, unique factors
Charney and Greenberg (2002)	The Internet	Division entertainment, peer identity, good feelings, coolness, keep informed, communications, sights and sounds, career
Papacharissi (2002)	Personal home pages	Entertainment, pass time, information, self-expression, professional advancement, communication with friends and family
Ko et al. (2005)	The Internet	Entertainment, social interaction, information, convenience
Diddi and LaRose (2006)	Internet news	Entertainment, escapism, habit, pass time, surveillance, news quizzes
Jun and Lee (2007)	Mobile media	Mobility, convenience, fashion, information, entertainment, relaxation, sociality
Haridakis and Hanson (2009)	Video-sharing website	Convenient entertainment, convenient information, co-viewing, social interaction,
Zolkepli and Kamurulzaman (2011)	Social media	Personal integrative needs, social integrative needs, tension release needs

Source: (Lim & Ting, 2012, p. 50)

Charney & Greenberg (2002) observe that apart from other mass communication theories that focus of what media does, UGT focuses on the audience and question on what people do with media and how they choose a particular media over the other means of communication. In brief, UGT states that users have various needs and uses for internet services including social media that include entertainment; pass time and time management; tension release needs; information exchange and convenience; news updates; companion and social interaction; surveillance; fashion; personal and social integrative needs; good feelings and obsession or part of habit. In reviewing the literature under study, the most striking factors of the Uses and Gratification theory in relation to social networking sites (SNSs) were found by Park, Kee, and Valenzuela (2009) and LaRose and Eastin (2004). Park et al. (2009) found the major uses and gratification factors of SNS users to be: socializing, entertainment, self-status seeking, and information. LaRose and Eastin (2004) found similar factors like the need for information-seeking, entertainment, and social needs to be the most prevalent. The social component is the central (and most important element) in applying the U and G model to SNSs. Users who participate in SNSs in order to gratify socialising needs typically desire to meet new people, sustain offline relationships, and create a sense of community (Park et al., 2009). A study to complement the UGT was carried out in Kuwait. The research sought to delineate user motivations with exploratory factor analysis. A questionnaire was distributed to 1 327 undergraduate students with their consent. Data collected revealed that almost all respondents used social media and their motivations for doing so being entertainment, information seeking, personal utility and convenience. These factors were positively related to the user's experience, time spent, and level of satisfaction with social media. The researcher recommended future studies to unearth the cultural values of users and examine other possible motivations, taking into account their context (Al-Menayes1, 2015).

Performance Theory
The concept of performance is multidimensional and dynamic and has two facets: action and outcome aspect (Sonnentag & Frese, 2001). Due to its duality nature, authors have not agreed on the precise definition of the term (Conway, 1999). However, most

studies concur that performance is about action. The behavioural aspect of performance has several proponents as compared to supporters of outcome-based definition. In addition, performance has three dimensions: the individual, group and organisational aspects. This study, therefore, concentrates on the individual behavioural aspect of performance definition. At the basic level performance means the individual's proficiency with which one performs activities and contributes to group and organisational performance. Kluger and DeNisi (1996) contend that individual performance is not stable over time, it varies reflecting learning processes, long-term changes and temporary nature of performance. Conway (1999) opines that organisations and work as a whole are going through significant changes which have dramatic effect on understanding worker performance. However, central to this trend are issues of continuous learning; proactivity; increase in teamwork; globalisation; and technology. This study zooms on the emergence of social media as new communication platform for workers and and how it impacts on worker performance.

Evolution of Social Media
Social networking sites have transcended all sectors of human interactions. Though it is not a new concept, it started with the telephone innovation to the modern computer systems and became a daily practice in most users' lives. According to Seymour et al. (2011), social media are forms of electronic communication through which users create online (virtual) communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, videos and files among others. It is usually exhibited as social networking sites which allows for people, companies and even countries to network and that is why it is termed 'social.' The first encounter of such social networking capabilities was witnessed in 1792 when the telegraph was used to transmit and receive messages over long distances (Carton, 2009). Social networks have evolved over the years to its modern-day variety that uses digital platforms. It migrated from simple telephone in the 1790s, emails in the 1960s, real-time virtual world in the 1970s, realtime chats in the 1980s and to the many social networking sites of today then created in the 1990s (McCorvey, 2010; Hoffman & Fodor, 2010; Hartshorn, 2010).

Types of social media
The period 2000 to-date has witnessed a myriad of social media platforms which has boosted the interaction of individuals and organisations sharing common interests in music, education, movies, and friendship based on social networks (Swartz, 2010). There are a number of such social media networks that include MySpace, Facebook, Twitter, Badoo, Twoo, WhatsApp and Bedo among others. These allow users to create a profile online, upload pictures and videos and share files. Furthermore, these social networking sites have more advanced features to allow users to control their privacy, are instant and real-time, allow chats, creation of thematic pages and groups among others. Social networks usually have privacy controls that allow the user to choose who can view their profile or contact them. They allow users to create groups that share common interests or affiliations, upload videos, and hold discussions in forums (WordPress, 2010; Seymour, Watson, Koume, Kalangot, & Edosomwan, 2011; and McCorvey, 2010). Due to the differences in social and personal parameters, people, organisations and nations create and use social networking sites for different psychological, socio-economic and geo-political reasons.

Factors that cause workers to adopt social media
Social networking sites have been used for various uses and functionalities by different people. Some have used social networking sites (SNSs) for communicating with friends, business promotion activities, entertainment, emotional and cognitive development, and religious reasons among others (Banbersta, 2010; ECAR Research, 2008; Goulet, Rainie, & Purcell, 2011; Hollier, 2009; and Sponcil & Gitimu, 2010). Many times, however, businesses create a corporate profile on social networks simply to keep in step with current trends, rather than it being any part of their corporate business strategy, consequently achieving only unsatisfactory results (Assis-Dorr, 2012).

Ward van Zoonen (2014) carried out a study to examine the motives of employees to engage in work-related social media use focusing on the use of personal social media accounts to communicate about work-related issues. Through an online questionnaire, using purposive sampling technique, 514 Dutch employees were asked about their social media use and motivation to do so. The structural equation modelling (SEM) was used to test the hypotheses. Results indicated that work related social media use is likely to take place spontaneously rather than deliberately and consciously planned. The online behaviours are largely unintentional, impulsive and spontaneous, driven by a need to express one's identity. Ward van Zoonen (2014) concluded that work-related social media use is better understood in terms of identity expressiveness than in terms of behavioural intentions or attitude towards social media behaviour.

Xiongfei Cao (2015) in a study to investigate the influence of social media on employees' work performance, as well as the underlying mechanism for how they create value at work used the media synchronicity and social capital theories on three hundred and seventy-nine (379) Chinese working professionals. The empirical results revealed that social media can promote the formation of employees' social capital indicated by network ties, shared vision and trust, which, in turn, can facilitate knowledge transfer. Shared vision and knowledge transfer positively influence work performance. Although network ties and trust do not have a direct impact on work performance, the influence is partially mediated by knowledge transfer. The researchers recommend that for organizations that wish to build knowledge networks in the workplace, connecting experts with various social media can effectively complement other knowledge management technology.

Further, managers should encourage employees to consciously exploit the by-products created via social media, for instance social capital, to promote knowledge exchange. Jan, Abdullah and Momen (2015) observe that SNSs have assumed a big role in society by providing social, educational, business, technological and communicative power to its users. Figure 1 shows the main pillars that drive people and organisations into using SNSs in their daily lives and work routines.
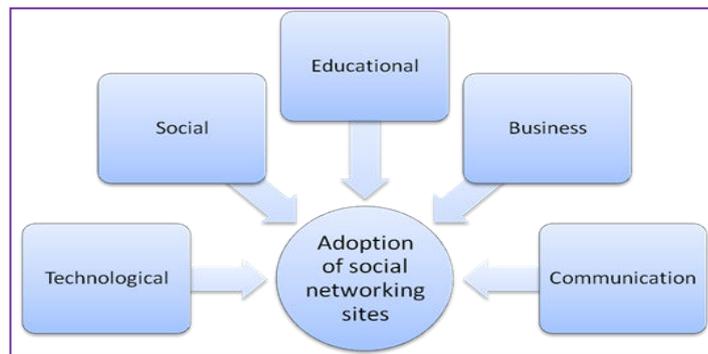
Fig 1: Conceptual Model for Determinants of Social Networking Sites Use
Source: (Jan, Abdullah, & Momen, 2015, p. 269)

Relationship of social media use and worker performance
Most studies Castilla (2005), Moqbel (2012), Ferreira and du Plessis (2009) and Wu (2010) concur that there is little research on the link between worker performance and their use of social networking sites. However, they point out that the general feeling among many companies is that SNSs do negatively affect company performance and thus some organisations have instituted strict work rules to ban use of SNSs during work periods. Surprisingly, the few studies by some authors in America, Africa (South Africa) and Yemen have shown that if properly integrated into work structures, social networking sites can positively boost worker connectedness, collaboration and knowledge sharing. This has been one such mediating variable that drive worker motivations and work skills. Productivity can be improved through use of SNSs. Ashraf (2014), on the other hand carried out a research at banks in Pakistan to find out the impact of social networking like Facebook, Twitter, Slideshare, LinkedIn, etc on employee performance. The study showed that social networking has become an integral part of everyone's life and has a strong impact. Social networking can be a weakness to an organization when it affects its productivity negatively. The same social networking becomes strength for organizations when it's used to build good relationships with employees, to direct them, to collect information about employee behaviour and to train them.

Xiongfei (2015) in their empirical study conceded that social media use at work enhances network ties among employees. Network ties in-turn enhances knowledge transfer. Network ties constitute channels for information and resource flows, influencing both access to parties for exchanging knowledge and anticipation of value through such exchange. The study further proved that social media use at work enhances shared vision among employees. Shared vision enhances work performance through bonding mechanism that facilitates different sections of an organization to integrate resources, smooth cooperation and coordinate actions. Social media use at work enhances trust among employees. Trust enhances work performance in terms of both effectiveness and efficiency. Zyl (2009) carried out a research in South Africa focusing on the impact of Web 2.0 or Social Networking 2.0 on organisations with specific emphasis on the perceived benefits and negative effects on business. The research was in the form of literature review of the available resources. Reasons for the implementation of Social Networking 2.0 showed that social networking platforms increase productivity, workflow efficiency, staff motivation and innovation. Some of the key reasons against the implementation of Social Networking 2.0 were found to be the perceived advantages of the existing hierarchical organisational structure where knowledge workers are grouped into channels and information is communicated in one direction as opposed to the open platform approach advocated by emergent web-based platforms, the fear that social networking platforms will have a negative effect on productivity and the potential loss of confidential or sensitive data through negligent or malicious acts by employees or through social engineering or malware attacks. The author recommended for future research regarding the risks and methods to mitigate the impact of these risks.

Aguenza & Som (2012) set out to investigate the relevance of collaborative technologies such as social networking sites on employee productivity; and relationship between social networking and employee productivity. The study was a general review and obersvation of employees in Europe and Saudi Arabia. It was found out that social networking sites stimulate employee collaboration and increased knowledge sharing. This may decrease or increase employee productivity depending on how well the use of social media is channelled to maximum work results. Employees can succumb to social media obsession pitfalls and abuse that may have detrimental effects if not properly managed. According to Aguenza and Som (2012) social networking sites pose several work risks that include network and information security breaches; increased company costs in bandwidth usage; reduced network performance; legal liability; and employee depression and health risks. Such issues have been found to negatively affect worker performance. From the study, it was recommended that employers implement policies and strategies that increase benefits from use of social media platforms. Interesting in this study was lack of reference to specific case or situation and the study remained on a generic nature. Furthermore, no specific strategies to curb negative impacts of social media were mentioned. However, it suggests that worker behaviour and performance is linked to how one uses social networking sites both at and off work. Similar to this observation was found by (Brooks, 2015). A conceptual paper by (Aguenza, 2012) noted that widespread use of social networks in the workplace poses many challenges as it changes the way people interact within the organization. The principal risks that organizations face in regard to social networking being: perceived loss in staff productivity, data leakage from staff gossiping freely in an open environment, damage to a business's reputation, scam practiced by cyber crooks, and the open access to organization's information due to outdated passwords. Posting on social media sites is also vulnerable to cyber criminal activities by disseminating wrong information which can cause embarrassment to the organization concerned. Brooks (2015)

examined the effects of personal social media usage on task performance. A survey of literature by the author pointed to dearth of empirics on relationship between social media use and job peformance. However, most researches were biased towards elucidating on social media addiction and its distracting nature without elaborating on why then an increasing trend in use of social media. Brooks (2015) sought out to illuminate on this gap. He carried out some documentary analysis and evaluation of company reports. Findings were that personal usage of social media during work times has negative consequences. However, the author admits that this study is not conclusive and further research is required using different approach so as to settle this debate.

Against the continual debate on impact of social media on work performance – job satisfaction, commitment, absenteeism, turnover intention, innovative behaviour, and job peformance; Moqbel (2012) reviewed literature on the subject matter and developed a research model and hypothesis. From the model it was predicted that intensity in the use of social media will influence employee work-related outcomes. As a testing process of this model, Moqbel (2012) surveyed four hundred and twenty-six (426) both full and part time employees in Yemen and United States focusing on the following worker variables: job satisfaction, work commitment, absenteeism, turnover intention, and innovative behaviour. Job satisfaction, and innovative behaviour were found to directly influence job performance and mediating effect of social networking sites use. There was no major difference found between the two countries.

Materials and methods
Study area and setting
According to Mukamo (2013), Harare is the Capital City of Zimbabwe founded in 1890 by the British Pioneer Column as "Fort Salisbury" which was later called "Salisbury." It started as a Municipality and later became a City in 1935. Harare City has an estimated total population of 2.1 million (ZIMSTAT 2012). The City is run by an elected Non-Executive Mayor, Deputy Mayor, 46 elected Councillors and 12 Councillors who are special appointments by the Minister of Local Government Urban and Rural Development (Marongwe, 2003). The Councillors represent residents of the wards in which they are elected while the special appointment Councillors are brought in to complement on the expertise that is needed in various council departments at policy level. Harare City has 6 000 workers headed by departmental directors who in turn report directly to the Town Clerk. The City is comprised of 10 departments namely: Chamber Secretary; City Treasury; Harare Water and Sanitation; Engineering Services; Housing and Community Services; Human Capital Services; Health Services; Urban Planning Services; Amenities; and Town clerk.

The Harare City is experiencing general decline in service delivery though a number of strategies have been implemented such as restructuring of employees, streamlining of number of workers and departments and increased management of capital projects. The use of social media has increased from the lowest to the highest city worker. Literature indicates that social media has a direct link with productivity and it still remains to be discovered as to how this also affects performance at Harare City. This quantitative case study aimed at surveying the views of Harare City Council employees with regard to the impact of social media on worker performance. The study was underpinned on the following objectives: to find out the link between social media use and productivity; establish the effect of social media on productive time; pinpoint factors that contribute to use of social media platforms at workplace; and determine the types of social media platforms popularly in use at Harare City.

Sample Design
A case study approach was used in which employees of the City of Harare were respondents. According to Patten (2007) case studies allow for deeper and intensive scrutiny of a unit giving better evaluation of a subject. By confining this study to City of Harare as the unit of interest the researcher had ample time to probe and analyse local government operations as reflected in Harare municipality. Given the wider scope upon which perceptions and knowledge of City Council employees on the relationship between social media usage and worker performance was much better gleaned using quantitative tools. This allowed much wider data to be collected over a short period of time and designing and deploying questionnaires over concentrated population of employees working from same geographical location, Harare. Statistical analysis using computerised applications which is rare for qualitative researches was also possible. Furthermore, the data (in form of five-point Likert scale) enabled objective evaluations to be done. Large sample size was considered because more numerical data increases reliability of a study and promotes credibility in the procedure and analysis of the data. Qualitative methods would have introduced unsystematic data analysis and interpretation that cost in terms of reliability and applicability of the results. Thus, this study adopted structured questionnaires to gather data from employees of City of Harare.

Sample size determination
City of Harare has ten (10) departments with an estimated employee establishment of 6 000. Guided by Denscombe (2010), stratified random sampling was used as it guaranteed fair representation across different departments as shown in Table 2. To calculate the sample size for each strata (department), proportional stratified sampling was used (Kinyua & Jagongo, 2013) as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Proportions of Respondents Sampled per Department

Department	Total Number of Workers	Formula	Proportional Sample Per Strata
Chamber Secretary	125	(125/6000)x300	6
City Treasury	300	(300/6000)x300	15
Harare water and Sanitation	1100	(1100/6000)x300	55

Engineering Services	1050	*(1050/6000)x300*	53
Housing and Community Service	1200	*(1200/6000)x300*	60
Human Capital Services	450	*(450/6000)x300*	23
Health Services	890	*(890/6000)x300*	45
Urban planning Services	610	*(610/6000)x300*	30
Amenities	140	*(140/6000)x300*	7
Town clerk	135	*(135/6000)x300*	6
TOTAL	6000		300

In line with Dawson (2002), Hollier (2009) and Seymour et al. (2011) who opine that for survey designs sample sizes should be greater than 30, a total of 300 survey questionnaires were distributed to City of Harare to improve sample data representativeness. The sample size for Stratum A = number in that stratum (x) divided by total number of workers (6 000) then multiplied by sample size for the entire study (300).

Therefore, sample size: $A = \frac{x}{6000} X 300$

Data Collection and Analysis
Survey questionnaires were distributed as self-administered questionnaires, some online as fillable forms and for some respondents (employees), questionnaires were distributed in person by the researchers. Follow-ups in the form of phones calls, email reminders and personal visits were done so as to boost the response rate. On collection, questionnaires were serialised to allow for organisation of responses. Before capturing the data, all responses were cross-checked with all spoiled papers separated from the main stream relevant responses. Data was captured and filtered into SPSS wherein descriptive analysis in form of graphs, tabulation and statistical parameters were drawn. Furthermore, some simple cross-tabulation analysis of the relationship between social media and level of work performance was explored. Descriptive statistics such as graphs, tables and pie charts were used to give visual display of underlying variables of social media and work performance. A pilot study, in which 20 questionnaires were ditsributed to some of the employees of the municipality was done. This allowed some questions to be adjusted so as to meet the common understanding of the meaning of all questions by respondents. Cronbach's alpha test for reliability was carried out to statistically measure the reliability factor of the research instruments.

Results and discussion
Of the 300 questionnaires that were distributed to employees of the city of Harare, only 185 managed to respond representing a 62% response rate. The 185 responses subsequently formed the sample size for analysis. According to Trochim (2009) surveys should be properly designed to improve response rate. In this study a response rate of 62% was recorded due to rigorous follow-ups that were made and flexibility for employees to choose between fillable online questionnaires and hard copies that some employees filled in manually. To ensure reliability and validity of the research instrument, the questionnaire was subjected to calibration from views of experts from social media houses who advised on the nature and type of questions to ask. Furthermore, the research questionnaire items were drawn from the constructs and variables of the Uses and Gratification Theory and based on the research objectives of the study. This improved the relevance and validity of the responses. Additionally, statistical test for reliability using Cronbach's alpha test was done as shown in Table 3. This study showed Cronbach's alpha value of 0.726 indicating that the research questionnaire items had higher internal consistency and repeatedly produced similar meaning to the respondents. Thus, the scale can reliably be used to measure such similar constructs in other studies.

Table 3: Cronbach's alpha test for reliability

Case Processing Summary			N	%
Cases		Valid	180	100.0
		Excluded[a]	0	.0
		Total	180	100.0
a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.				
Reliability Statistics				
Cronbach's Alpha			N of Items	
.726			24	

The types of social media platforms popularly in use at Harare City
As shown in Table 4, most respondents (58%) concurred that Facebook and Twitter was less used at Harare City Council. Furthermore, more than 80% of the respondents stated that they had never used Badoo, Twoo and other unnamed social media platforms. Interestingly an overwhelming number (86%) revealed that WhatsApp is highly used at Harare City Council while divergent views were expressed on use of Youtube. The results though pointed to similar type of social media used at work by people, there is disparities in the order of popularity among these social media platforms. Assis-Dorr (2012), Gaal (2015) and Xiongfei (2015) observed that Facebook and Twitter were most used in America and Europe by many business people to create business profiles and market products. This study showed slightly different results with WhatsApp being most popualr folowed by Facebook while twitter is rarely used.
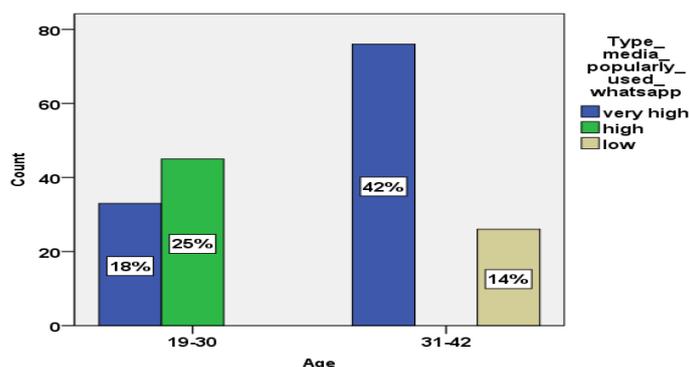
Given the popularity of WhatsApp (see Table 4), it was of interest for this study to examine the link between age and usage of WhatsApp. The study revealed that those below 42 years constitute 86% of the respondents who use WhatsApp more than any

other social media application. A meagre 14% of the respondents in the age group 31- 42 years use WhatsApp less frequently. The study thus deduced that the younger to middle age group uses WhatsApp on a high scale as compared to the older generation. According to Hampton, Goulet, Rainie, and Purcell (2011), a survey carried out in America indicated that 79% of the Americans use social networking sites (SNSs) and of these 38% are adults thus indicating a higher percentage (41%) of youngsters using social media. Similar surveys carried out by Sponcil & Gitimu (2010) on global college students indicated that 82% of the students use one or more of the SNSs and 57% of these are between 18 to 29 years old.

Table 0: Types of social media popularly used at the Harare City Council

	Very high	High	Never used	Low	Very low
Facebook	62	0	12	65	41
	34%	0%	7%	36%	23%
WhatsApp	109	45	0	26	6
	61%	25%	0%	14%	0%
Twitter	17	40	0	58	65
	9%	22%	0%	22%	36%
Youtube	1	57	38	61	23
	1%	32%	21%	34%	13%
Badoo	0	0	168	0	12
	0%	0%	93%	0%	7%
Twoo	0	0	169	11	0
	0%	0%	94%	6%	0%
others	1	11	144	0	24
	1%	6%	80%	0%	13%

Relationship between age and WhatsApp usage

Fig 2: *Influence of age on WhatsApp usage*

Factors that contribute to use of social media platforms at workplace
In this section, respondents were asked to identify reasons for use of social media at their work places. As shown in Table 4-3, the majority of employees (at least 87%) felt that use social media is driven by a number of factors: socialising; sharing of sentiments; academic purpose; personal gratification; sharing information; religious reasons and for work and business-related factors. Interestingly, all the employees (100%) conceded that socialising, education, and sharing information are the major reasons for their use of social media at work. Results from this study concur with surveyed literature Zolkepli and Kamurulzaman (2011), and Park et al. (2000)) and the Uses and Gratification theory (Rayburn, 1996) that points out that various socio-economic and psychological factors drive people both at and off work to use different social media platforms.

Table 5: Factors that influence of use of social media at work

	Strongly agree	agree	Not sure	disagree	Strongly disagree
Connecting and socialising	120	60	0	0	0
	67%	33%	0%	0%	0%
Sharing emotion and sentiments	38	100	22	8	0
	21%	56%	12%	4%	0%
Education and academic purpose	81	99	0	0	0
	45%	55%	0%	0%	0%
Personal gratification	64	103	1	12	0
	36%	57%	1%	7%	0%
Sharing information	82	98	0	0	0
	46%	54%	0%	0%	0%
Religious reasons	43	112	24	0	0
	24%	62%	13%	0%	0%
Work related activities	62	95	0	23	0
	34%	53%	0%	13%	0%

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International Journal of Research in Engineering and Management   **Sibanda & Kudya**   **Vol. 2. No. 2**   **ISSN: 2456-1029**

The effect of social media on productive time

Respondents were asked to assess the effect of use of social media on their productive time. Responses were recorded as frequency and percentage counts as shown in Table 6. Most employees of Harare City (at least 53%) felt that social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Youtube have no effect on their productive time. This is reflecting the point that most employees at the Council rarely use such platforms (see Table 3). Majority expressed uncertainty over the impact of Badoo, Twoo and other social media on their productive time. Interestingly, all employees surveyed (100%) reported that WhatsApp reduces their useful time on their job tasks. Aguenza and Som (2012) argue that social media does not reduce productive time but rather stimulates employee collaboration and increase knowledge sharing. However, Seymour et al. (2011) concur with findings from this study that intensity of use of social media is inversely related to time spent on productive work.

Table 6: Effects of social media on productive time

	Very much	much	Never used	little	Very little
Facebook	7	49	13	**33**	**78**
	4%	27%	7%	**18%**	**43%**
WhatsApp	**107**	**34**	0	26	13
	59%	**19%**	0%	14%	7%
Twitter	0	13	51	**59**	**57**
	0%	7%	28%	**33%**	**32%**
Youtube	1	46	39	**46**	**48**
	1%	26%	22%	**26%**	**27%**
Badoo	0	0	**167**	0	13
	0%	0%	**93%**	0%	7%
Twoo	0	0	**157**	0	23
	0%	0%	**87%**	0%	13%
Others	0	11	**155**	0	14
	0%	6%	**86%**	0%	8%

The impact of social media use on productivity

In this section, employees presented their view on the impact of use of social media on performance (productivity) of employees. Furthermore, to clarify on different aspects of productivity impacted, employees were asked to evaluate impact of social media use at work with regard to total useful time spent and flow and exchange of information at work. Results were recorded on Figure 3.
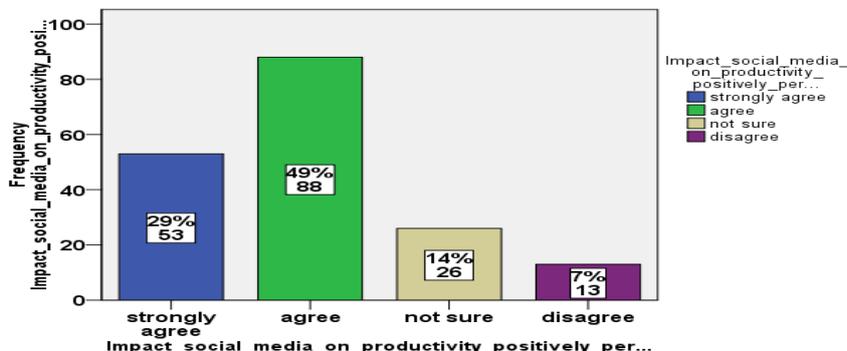

Fig 3: Impact of social media on productivity

As shown in Figure 3, at least 49% of the respondents agreed that social media has impact on productivity and reduces useful time spent on work but improves flow and exchange of work related information. Several authors agree that social media is related to productivity levels while some contradicts the notion. Authors such as Brooks (2015) propound that social media has negative effect on productive while Meesala (2013) in his studies in India showed that there is no relationship between use of social media and productivity of workers.

Conclusion

The study revealed that WhatsApp is most used by Harare City Council employees during working hours with 61% indicating they use WhatsApp at a very high rate and 25% on a high rate. Secondly, various socio-economic and psychological reasons (sharing of sentiments; academic purpose; personal gratification; sharing information; religious reasons and for work and business-related factors) determine the use of social media at the work place. All the reasons received a fair amount of selection from the study. Thirdly, WhatsApp reduces productive time of employees at Harare City while use of Facebook, Youtube, and Twitter has very low effect of the amount of time spent on useful work. There is uncertainty on the effect of Badoo, Twoo and other social media platforms not named in this study. Lastly, the intensity of use of social media is inversely related to productivity. As use of social media increases, productivity decreases.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are preferred:

Firstly, given the high percentage of use of WhatsApp at work by employees for various socio-economic and psychological reasons including exchange of work related information, the Harare City Council may need to consider implementing a social media use policy aimed at regulating the use and application of social media at work. Secondly, the growing use of WhatsApp may provide an opportunity for the Council to incorporate such social media into formal channels of communication. Social networking will enable formation of alliances, getting help, transmission of information and taking actions to achieve certain results. This recommendation is based on the assumption that use of social networking in the workplace continues to increase and that internet security will be perfect in filtering personal or business information on social networks in order to educate, train and inform its employees on pertinent work-related and social issues that may affect employees. This will improve the Council's daily operations. Thirdly, management at Harare City may need to consider use of social media for addressing social issues and work-related issues through creating formal social media pages and groups for its employees to ensure employee socialisation and stimulate oneness and team building culture at work that may improve performance of employees. Finally, it is important to note that organizations should work with, not against social media because organizations that fight the advancing technology are fighting a losing battle.

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