# UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

# DEPARTMENT OF JOURNALISM AND MASS COMMUNICATION

# STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF ONLINE LEARNING ON THE BRAND IMAGE OF INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING IN KENYA: CASE OF UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI, MAIN CAMPUS

## MWENDE JACKINE
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# DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, hereby affirm that this research project is my original work and has not been previously presented, in part or wholly, to any other institution of learning for the award of any degree or examination.

Signed ................... Date 01 12 2022

Mwende Jackline

K50/7967/2017

This research project has been submitted with my approval as the University Supervisor.

Signed................... Date 1 12 2022

Dr. Silas Oriaso,

University of Nairobi

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

## DEDICATION

I dedicate this project to my Dear Mum and Grandma. Their hard work and zeal in life has always encouraged me to always give my all in everything I do.

To my younger Brother who looks up to me, may this be a motivation for you to scale greater heights than I have.

To my entire family, school mates, friends and everyone else who has supported me in one way or another, may God bless you immensely.

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# ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATION

**UON:** University of Nairobi

**ICT:** Information Communication Technology

**WWW:** World Wide Web

# ABSTRACT

Covid-19 pandemic resulted to closure of all learning organizations in Kenya pushing universities to offer online learning as a substitute to the conventional way of learning in a classroom setting. However, significant issues and concerns arose in this particular learning setup especially in relation to lack of physical interaction that happens at the institutions of higher learning among students to students, students and lecturers, students and the faculty, students and management, university activities like graduation ceremonies, orientations, games and so on. This study set out to establish students' perceptions of online learning on the brand image of institutions of higher learning in Kenya, case of University of Nairobi, Main Campus. The objectives of this study were: to determine students' perceptions of online learning on the brand image of University of Nairobi, Main Campus; to assess the impact of online learning on the brand image of University of Nairobi, Main Campus; to find out how credibility of online learning affects the brand image of University of Nairobi, Main Campus and to examine how online learning will affect the future brand image of University of Nairobi, Main Campus. The study was guided by the: Technology Acceptance Model and Transactional Distance Theory. This quantitative study embraced a descriptive research design. Quantitative data was collected using a structured questionnaire. Krejecie and Morgan (1970) table was adopted to calculate sample size of 383 undergraduate students from the University of Nairobi, Main Campus. Stratified random sampling was used as the sampling technique for the survey. Data analysis was done by descriptive statistics using SPSS 25.0 and Microsoft Excel and presented using tables and diagrams.

# CHAPTER 1

# INTRODUCTION

## 1.0    Overview

Chapter one covers the introduction, background of the study, problem statement, research objectives, research questions, justification of the study, significance of the study, scope of the study, limitations of the study and definitions of working terms for the study.

## 1.1    Background of the Study

Covid-19 pandemic presented a never-seen-before challenge and disruption to the education sector throughout the entire world. The pandemic disrupted the school lives of students and their instructors in numerous angles and aspects, disrupting not only their programs and levels they were in, but also where they had gotten in their studies before the pandemic struck (Daniel, 2020). Various learning institutions, along with their instructors and students had to find new approaches to avert the damage caused by the pandemic and to continue with their learning in online platforms (Lu et al, 2020).

Technological advances since the 1990s have led to the rise of growth of use of online platforms in online learning. Currently, learning institutions provide online learning with integrated online tools and platforms (Rodriguez, Ooms & Montanez, 2008). As per Allen and Seaman (2013), online learning set-ups started back in 2002. Then, few learning organizations had adopted the new setup of learning and acknowledged it as a means that could be a durable strategy to learning in the long run. Over time, the number rose to almost seventy five percentage. Tracing the rise of online learning in institutions post-secondary schools, the Department of Education in the United States said that the sum total of all students who were enrolled in online learning increased to almost five and a half million in year 2012 from around four million in the year 2007.

Online learning is also oftenly related to internet learning, virtual learning, cyber learning and learning on own schedule within a particular time frame via the internet (Office of Sustainable Development, 2000). Online learning according to Kearsly (2000) is shaped by factors like authenticity, collaboration, connectivity, exploration, student-centeredness, multi-sensory experience and shared knowledge. Volery (2000) stated that online learning is education that is administered, distributed and made possible by the use of internet.

Paulsen (2002) claimed that online learning is identified by the separation distance between the instructors and students (differentiated from the traditional class room learning setting), the force behind a learning institution (distinguished from individual studying), the availability of an internet network to administer, distribute and present learning content and the presence of two-way communication through internet network that enables students to communicate with fellow students, with the instructor and faculty.

The internet, online meetings, streaming videos and new advances in technologies have made online learning in institutions of higher learning more affordable and attainable for students especially for students that were not able to attain their higher education in the conventional face to face classroom learning set-up (Bianco & Carr-Chellman, 2002). Now, online learning has transformed into a crucial component of learning institution's strategy in expanding their curriculum. Harasim (1989) stated that online learning is the new territory which now combines distance learning between instructors and students with the application of traditional instructional physical classroom learning through the use of internet based communication. Ascough (2002) claimed that online learning has features like providing learning experience distinct from the traditional face to face learning because students are in a different context, communication and learning is via the internet through the world wide web (www), contribution and participation by students in online context is different, the communal and

social fabric of the learning context is different and there is minimal pre-conception, prejudice and discrimination.

Allen and Seaman (2003) in a study about online learning in institutions of higher learning in the United States, discovered that 80% of the learning content in those learning institutions was conveyed through online platforms. Online learning is used to provide education to students who are separated by distance from their instructors by use of internet, communication via internet and computers. Online programs and degrees are another method to cover conventional classroom learning.

## 1.2    Online Learning

According to Garisson & Anderson (2003), online learning is composed of a network where learning occurs in a formal learning environment and uses a range of different technologies. It is learning system that is supported by use of electronic hardware and software. Chan et al., (2007) claimed that online learning is made up of learning enhanced by computer and is delivered through use of a personal computer. Online learning is delivered through internet based communication technologies like online lectures and tutorials.

Online learning may improve attainability to education and learning, the quality of teaching and training and mark the requirement for institutions of higher learning to keep up with competitive advantage in the changing environment of online learning. This has resulted to the full employment of technology in improving learning and teaching process while still delivering learning programs to more students at a reduced cost (Peled, 2000 and Hafizah and Kamil, 2009).

Various learning institutions of higher learning around the world have continued with their learning activities even as Covid 19 pandemic went on, giving students a chance to continue with their education by providing learning through a variety of learning programs which were convenient and flexible to the students (Lu et al., 2020). Kenya like any other country in the world also experienced the damaging effects from the pandemic, which resulted to the closure

of all learning institutions (Manduku, J. Kosgey & Sang, 2012). The closure of all learning institutions hindered the traditional face to face learning at schools which led to some institutions embracing online learning programs so as to reach out to students at home. This was done through the use of different means like radio, television, computers, mobile phones, internet (zoom meetings, Microsoft teams, google meet, google class, webinar and so on) . These devices are powered by electricity to enable online learning as a substitute to conventional, physical classroom learning (Sharma, R. 2003).

## 1.3 Statement of the Problem

With the increase of online learning in institutions of higher learning, Song, Singleton, Hill, and Koh (2004) posed several questions: What are students' thoughts towards online learning? Does this change of learning from the traditional face to face have effect on the brand image of their learning institutions? What makes online learning a successful accomplishment to students? What needs to be improved and implemented to ensure better access and success to students in online learning environments?

With no physical interaction between students to students, students and lecturers, students and management, faculty and students and so on as prior, no physical engagements like orientations, games, trainings, graduation ceremonies, will the brand  image of  learning institutions be the same again?  Song et al., (2004) stated that identifying answers to the above questions would assist in managing the brand image of learning institutions in the future of online education.

Those who oppose online learning ask whether it offers same interaction opportunities between instructors and students, amongst students themselves as is the case in the traditional learning setup (Roblyer & Ekhaml, 2000).  They also question the level of quality in online learning since the quality is dependent on the instructors who teach and guide students in online programs and the quality of their outcome is not guaranteed (Weiger, 1998). Rodriguez et al.,

(2008) claimed that for higher learning institutions to sustain students' enrollment, it will depend on the brand image of the learning institutions as a result of learning experiences and perceptions of the students. This study sought to respond to this research gap by examining students' perceptions of online learning on the brand image of University of Nairobi, Main Campus.

## 1.4 Objectives of the study

1. To determine students' perception of online learning on the brand image of University of Nairobi, Main Campus.

2. To assess the impact of online learning on the brand image of University of Nairobi, Main Campus

3. To find out how credibility of online learning affects the brand image of University of Nairobi, Main Campus

4. To examine how online learning will affect the future brand image of University of Nairobi, Main Campus.

## 1.5 Research Questions

1. What are the students' perceptions of online learning on the brand image of University of Nairobi, Main Campus?

2. What are the impacts of online learning on the brand image of University of Nairobi, Main Campus?

3. How does the credibility of online learning affect the brand image of University of Nairobi, Main Campus?

4. How will online learning affect the future brand image of University of Nairobi, Main Campus?

**1.6     Justification of the Study**

Bennett & Bennett, (2002), Goodwin, (1993) and Hara & Kling, (1999) stated that in the past, there has been studies researching on effectiveness of learning online. However, there is little research conducted to find out the perception of online learning from a student's perspective on the brand image of their institutions of higher learning. With the change of mode of learning from the traditional classroom set-up, lack of physical interaction in institutions of higher learning between students to students, students and lecturers, students and faculty, student and management, this study set out to determine students' perceptions of online learning on the brand image of institutions of higher learning in Kenya.

Although online learning presents a different form of delivery of learning content, it needs the same effort in assessing and monitoring as traditional face to face learning (Greener, 2008). In any institution of higher learning, Armstrong (2011) stated that instructors and management should be concerned with quality of online learning they offer to students and not just on the quantity of degrees they award the students with. Warschauer (2007) suggested that more research be done on the perception of use of technological advancements by students' in online learning that determines how they view the brand image of their learning institution, which in turn will help learning institutions to adjust their teaching methods to increase student enrollment, learning and satisfaction. This study sought to fill that research gap.

**1.7  Significance of the Study**

Management of learning institutions, faculties, require to understand their 'customers' (student) perceptions of online learning from their own learning encounters. The findings from this study will assist institutions of higher learning, and other stakeholders in identifying ways to deliver better services in the administration and management of online learning in the face of circumstances beyond what they are used to.

Students' perception of online learning and how that affects brand image of learning institutions has not been studied adequately in the past. This study contributes to that research gap and offers itself as a resource material in future researches. It will also offer entrepreneurs in online schools with resourceful tips to improve access, success and satisfaction of students in their organizations

This study will help management of institutions of higher learning, online faculties and administrators to understand aspects that attract students to online learning, and this will help them in increasing enrollments and sustaining students. It will also help in guiding them in drafting curriculum changes that makes online learning a success to students.

## 1.8 Scope of the Study

The study was done at the University of Nairobi, Main Campus where the University has continued to offer online courses in many departments even when other universities have slowly resumed fully the physical trainings after Covid-19 pandemic.

## 1.9 Limitations of the Study

The limitations to this study were that it was conducted at the University of Nairobi, Main Campus in Kenya, in a country where there are other public universities, private universities, and other institutions of higher learning like colleges and TVETS. Also, the study included only undergraduate students at University of Nairobi, Main Campus.

## 1.10    Definition of key terms

**Attrition:** Dropping out of a learning program by students before expected time of completion.

**Brand image:** students' perceptions of University of Nairobi's products and services based on their interaction.

**Learning experiences:** The encounters of students in online learning environment.

**Online Learning:** Education where there is separation distance between instructors and students, students and other students, students and faculty, and learning is via the internet.

**Students':** Undergraduate students at University of Nairobi, Main Campus

**Perception:** Comprehension of ones' environment.

**CHAPTER 2**

**LITERATURE REVIEW**

**2.0 Overview**

This chapter explores the literature on variables of online education, brand image, student perceptions, learning experiences, theoretical framework and conceptual framework.

**2.1 Background**

Learning activities as a social activity were affected by Covid 19 pandemic. The impact of the pandemic was very huge, especially in the social field (Qiu, Chen & Shi, 2019). To hinder the spread of outbreaks, learning activities were done online (Abouk & Heydari, 2020). Community compliance in ensuring social distance was considered quite effective in suppressing the number of those getting infected by Covid-19 (Abouk & Heydari, 2020). This included compliance with not doing face-to-face learning.

According to Howland & Moore (2002), the issue of communication amongst students themselves and their instructors was a crucial issue. Absence of physical interaction between students and their instructors led to negative and pessimistic perceptions of the students. They felt frustrated and let down by their instructors especially when guidance and feedback was delayed. Howland & Moore (2002) also found out that students recorded that it was not easy to get assistance on clarifications on their assignments and coursework because of the absence of interaction with their instructors, which resulted to communication breakdown between the students and the instructors. The message board was the main channel of communication between the instructors and the students. Each student was post to comments or write a message on the board every week. This was not satisfying as the students repeatedly recorded that communication through the board was disappointing, ineffective and in poor quality (Howland & Moore, 2002). Delayed communication between the instructors and students is a

disadvantage of online learning contexts (Howland & Moore, 2002, Petrides, 2002, Hara & Kling, 1999 and Vonderwell, 2003).

Nash's (2005) in a study about how to retain students in online education reported that certain factors like superior course development and structure, quality instructions, better management, and well timed feedback impacted on student enrollment, retention and sustainability. Herbert (2006) carried out a research on student retention and satisfaction in online programs and discovered that students that recorded they were satisfied with online learning context reflected on their high rate of completion of online learning programs.

Rovai (2008) differed with Hebert when he reported that students' retention was as a result of persistence on the student's side which is affected by external and internal factors in a student's life like type of employment and hours at work, family responsibilities, studying habits, anxiety and tension brought about by stress and so on. Nichols (2010) seconded what Rovai said by reporting that most students who deferred from their online learning programs indicated that personal reasons contributed to their withdrawal from the programs.

Conrad (2002) indicated that when starting a new learning program students felt anxious, to which he suggested giving a detailed orientation to the students in what to expect during their course to alleviate the anxiety. Organized course structure, clear expectations of the course and introduction from the instructor was reported by Conrad as what students wished to be shared with them. Achtemeier, Morris and Finnegan (2003) concurred that sharing with students' what the course clear entailed, expectations and deadlines at the beginning of the learning program would keep students at peace and avoid anxieties.

Workman and Stenard (1996) argued that sharing with students a comprehensive and detailed guide of the course outline at the commencement of the online program would help students to help in familiarizing with the terms, procedures, policies and technical requirements for the online program. Artino (2011) said that in online learning contexts, having effective learning

environments and designing strategies in order to attain student satisfaction are important factors that learning institutions should implement. It is important to share with students the objectives of the learning program when starting the course so that students know what is expected of them and to have a clear understanding of the program. Students should be made aware of the outcomes expected from them and the assessment from the learning programs should reflect and measure the expected end results (Achtemeier et al., 2003, Hatziapostolou & Paraskakis, 2010 and Palomba & Banta, 1999).

Workman and Stenard (1996) reported that sharing with students' clear and quantifiable objectives and targets of the learning program was important to the satisfaction and success of students in online learning contexts. Thurmond, Wambach, Connors, and Frey (2002) conducted a study on student satisfaction and found out that predicting student satisfaction was assessable by various factors like instructors giving feedback promptly. Chickering & Gamson, (1983), Hatziapostolou & Paraskakis, (2010) and Palomba & Banta, (1999) said that instructors should give feedback on assessments promptly and the feedback should be specific to each student as students get motivated by the satisfaction or outcome of the grades. For feedback to be effective from the instructors to the students, it should be constructive, timely and be directly related to the criteria of assessment and the expected learning outcome of the program.

Sook, Jung and Im (2000) carried out a research to find out satisfaction of students in online learning context and they also reported negative response relating to ineffective feedback of instructors to students. Workman and Stenard (1996) suggested that effective and timely feedback build student self-esteem which is needed by the students to be successful in an online learning context. Deubel (2003) argued that interacting with content and using media appropriately led to student satisfaction and quality of learning online improved. Deubel (2003) further suggested that guiding materials should be located in a central place for easy access and that additional materials and resources like websites and other supplementary materials would

be great to enable students explore further in their learning program. Deubel (2003) also claimed that online materials from the instructor should comprise of online assistance and technical help, frequently asked questions, online library materials, databases, graphics and visuals and list of websites links related to the program's content which should be sized appropriately to avoid frustrating the students with long downloading time.

Tomei (2006) said that the most crucial factor in online learning context is the instructor to student interaction. As per Grandzol and Grandzol (2010), instructor and student interaction reflected as a strong connection with students' perception of online learning. As reported by Walther, Anderson, and Park (2008), communication became cold, less personal and more task oriented when cues were filtered and they suggested using technologies like blogging, podcasting to intervene the communication breakdown. Abdous & Yen (2010) claimed that ineffective communication, lack of prompt feedback and lack of physical interaction between the instructors and the students resulted to students being dissatisfied with their online learning programs and also led to high rates of withdrawal from the courses. Steinman (2007) recommended that instructors set online office hours to lessen the distance between them and the students, and this will be effective when the student both hears and sees the instructor.

According to Augustsson (2010), online learning is a collective learning process for the student rather than an avenue for instructors to convey instructions. Cohen, Carbone, & Beffa-Negrini, (2011) asserted that with the rapid changing context of online learning, it was important to include multiple technologies in the learning program. This may be like virtual lecture halls, emails, blogs, websites podcasts, videocasts, social book markings and networkings, discussion boards and document sharing devices, chats and wikis (Arnold & Paulus, 2010, Augustsson, 2010, Halic, Lee, Paulus & Spence, 2010, Kear, Woodthorpe, Robertson & Hutchison, 2010 and Preston, Phillips, Gosper, McNeill, Woo & Green, 2010). According to Schroeder,

Minocha & Schneider, 2010),  different web softwares with social networking sites like wikis offer better interaction levels between the instructors, students and the program content.

Rovai (2008) claimed that online learning students await similar type and level of convenience in accessing support services same in all aspects as those students going physically to campus. Such support services includes enrollment assistance, instructions and clarification support, and especially technological support. Seconding the above claims, Workman and Stenard (1996) concurred that students' in online learning context require prompt access to support services like advisers, book stores, financial assistance offices, library and so on. They also asserted that online learning students require access to coaching, orientation of study programs and technology support and training. Also, they proposed that tools that aid in different learning styles be used to support students with varying needs. Lee (2010) also stated that student in online learning context require support like during registration, support in terms of financial aid and technical support when they face technological challenges. McGorry (2003) claimed that online learning students require access to the institution's resources like electronic and online resources to enable students' research further and be busy and engaged throughout their learning program. Shea and Armitage (2002) stated that most learning organizations have abandoned offering support services to their online learning students because of absence of flexibility and limited resources.

## 2.2    Online Learning

The increase of online learning has brought about competition among institutions of higher learning (Loyen, Magda & Rikers, 2008). From this competition, there has been heightened emphasis and need to attend to students' satisfaction (Loyen, Magda & Rikers, 2008). Online learning comes forth with convenience and flexibility that captivates students (Dobbs, Waid and Carmen 2009). According to Boekaerts (2008), importance of students' perception has been neglected in most studies, but instead a lot of focus has been on the technical aspects of

online learning. Bollinger & Martindale, (2004) and Tallent-Runnels et al., (2006) stated that increase in online learning ought to necessitate more research and studies that focuses on satisfaction of students' in the online learning context. According to Neely & Tucker (2010), in online learning context, students are anticipated to be more active and participate more towards online learning and that program outcomes are heavily dependent on the students' attitude with regard to online learning.

Petrides (2002) in a study about students' perspectives of online learning indicated that some students recorded lack of and absence of immediacy in responses from their instructors when learning online unlike in conventional face to face setup. This is mostly in asynchronous learning set-ups, where some students are forced to slow down and wait for other students to study and answer posts or emails. Hara and Kling (1999) in a study about online learning program at a United States university reported that students said they felt frustrated due to lack of immediacy of responses from their instructors. Vonderwell (2003) also agreed that lack of immediate feedback from instructors was a disadvantage of online learning. One of the students reported that it could take hours or even a day or more for one to get an answer or clarification to their question from the instructor.

Vonderwell (2003) also recorded absence of online community and students feeling isolated from other students, instructors or from the faculty as another weakness of online learning contexts. He said that students reported lacking connection with their instructors particularly one on one relationship with their instructors. Woods (2002) in a study about online interaction between instructors and students found out that students in online learning environments said that they were isolated from the faculty and from other students in the learning program.

Supporters of online learning propose that absence of traditional, physical interaction may be replaced by virtual interactions inform of online discussions, virtual video conferences and so on (Blake, 2000). Learning online can encourage students' to think critically, have

collaborative learning skills, learn deeply and have problem-solving skills (Ascough, 2002, Rosie, 2000 and Briggs, 1999). Online learning may assist learning institutions to expand curricular programs that are less costly and help students obtain crucial technology skills that will help to enhance their marketability (Donlevy, 2003). Advocates of online learning also assert that online learning may promote non- discriminatory and non-biased learning environment because the instructors and learners do not meet physically. Palloff and Pratt (1999) said that due to instructors and students not interacting physically, hence, cannot tell the gender, race or physical features of one another, online learning provides a learning and teaching environment that is bias-free for the instructors and the students.

Government of Kenya has tried to integrate ICT in the education structure of the country. Even before Covid 19 pandemic happened, ICT sector in the country was under a revolution. The government's aim was to transform the way learning and teaching was being carried out in schools. The National ICT Policy for Education and Training (Ministry of Education, 2006) was established to introduce ICT in schools. The Kenyan Government via Vision 2030 aimed to establish an online-enabled and knowledge based society by year 2015. Learning and teaching was revolutionized in schools through the setting up of ICT technological infrastructure in public tertiary, secondary and primary schools in the country. Prominence to ICT facilities in schools was anchored on Session Paper No.1 of 2005. The paper's vision was that ICT facilities will be provided in all public schools where students, teachers and communities around the school environment would be equipped with ICT skills to enhance knowledge-based economy by 2015 (GOK, 2005). Even though the government of Kenya put in place ICT facilities and infrastructure in schools, the facilities had not been adequately utilized because most teachers are not equipped with technological skills to utilitize the facilities (Manduku, Kosgey & Sang, 2012, Laaria, 2012 and Otieno, 2013). The Ministry of Education in 2019 did an evaluation on the implementation of Schools' Improvement Program

(SIP) and it was reported that tablets and computers were supplies in most schools, but many of the schools do not utilize the tablets and computers to supplement learning and teaching. Therefore, the National ICT policy on education of 2006 did not meet its intended purpose.

### 2.2.1 Determinants of online learning effectiveness

Eom, Wen, and Ashill (2006) carried out a study about factors that determine student satisfaction in online learning where they used a framework that indicates factors that determine learning effectiveness from Piccoli, Ahmad, and Ives (2001). From their study, they found out that human and design factors are important online learning contexts. Human factors include instructors and students while design factors include interaction, program content, students' control and technology. As reported by Eom et al., student satisfaction is associated with interaction, instructor's facilitation, instructor's knowledge, instructor's promptness in giving feedback, learning style used, student self-motivation in learning and the program structure.

Moore (2005) identified pillars in Sloan-C framework that determine online learning effectiveness. This included access, cost effectiveness of learning, institutional commitment especially on quality, faculty preparedness, learning effectiveness and student expectations and satisfaction. Zhao (2003) who carried out a study to determine factors that influence online learning, Sloan-C framework was embraced as the guiding framework for the study, Zhao (2003) expanded the framework to include program effectiveness which was viewed to be crucial to online learning. Zhao suggested that institutions of higher learning should carry out their respective quality assurance plan as per their institutions using Sloan-C framework as a guide.

Studies about what composes students' satisfaction differ from one discipline to another. Lee (2010) stated that prompt and timely feedback to students from the instructors is important for students' satisfaction when learning online. Lee (2010) also stated that support services is also

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a predicting factor for satisfaction of students learning online. Also, social presence is another contributing component to students' satisfaction in online learning environment (Abdous & Yen, 2010 and Richardson & Swan, 2003). Satisfaction of students' is influenced by the availability of flexibility in a learning program, social presence during learning, program technology and availability of technical support (McGorry, 2003). According to Lorenzo and Moore (2002), satisfaction of students is a composition of timely, responsive and individually curated services and support, academic and administrative support services, high quality learning outcomes and student interaction and collaboration with instructors, other students and the faculty.

Babb, Stewart, and Johnson (2010) carried out a study about students' perceptions in a hybrid learning program using a framework that highlighted 7 principles needed for good practice during undergraduate education. This framework motivated active learning, communication of high expectations, cooperation among students, emphasis on time of tasks, instructor -student- faculty contact and interaction, respect  and regard of diverse talents, techniques and ways of learning, and prompt feedback. Babb et al., (2010) also noted that students were more likely to get satisfied when learning online if they were pro-active and involved in their learning. Chickering & Gamson (1983) suggested that students should be allowed to bring their personal incidents and occurrences into learning as this presents a more personalized and individualized aspect in the online programs. Instructors, faculty managers should encourage and motivate students to be active in their learning programs, participate in peer student to student reviews and engage in activities that inculcate growth of problem-solving skills and team building.

### 2.2.2  Sloan-C Satisfaction

Fredericksen, Pickett, Shea, Pelz and Swan (2000) carried out a research on the satisfaction of students' in online learning using Sloan-C framework for quality and satisfaction. They found out that students were more satisfied with their learning programs when they interacted more

with the instructors and other students. Also, reliability of technology and technical support received during technical hitches were also reported by students as factors that led to their satisfaction. Flexibility was also stated as a factor to students' satisfaction by those students who enrolled for online learning because of flexibility rather than those students who were in online learning just because they could not find a campus program to enroll in.

Petrides (2002) carried out a study to examine students' perspectives of online learning in a blended university class, meaning the course program was a one- semester class that was regularly scheduled where online learning was a supplement. Reports from the study indicated that some students said that they developed deep thinking of the subject courses when writing responses in comparison to when they were giving oral feedback. The students indicated that they continually reflected on other students' reflections as a result of the permanent, public showcasing of their online discussions on their websites. One student reported that one was forced to deeply think critically about the course they were studying when they were giving their responses in writing (Petrides, 2002). Another student agreed with the claims showing that online learning allowed students in online learning environment to reflect more than in the conventional classroom set-up.

Vonderwell (2003) in a study about students' perceptions about online learning reported that students in the online learning environment said that they wrote their ideas very carefully. For example, Vonderwell (2003) indicated that one of the students said that reflection was necessary since during the discussion questions one had to think deeply and reflect not just writing answers aimlessly.

Flexibility of learning has been said to be an advantage of online learning context (Petrides, 2002 and Schrum, 2002). Petrides (2002) reported that students in online learning programs claimed it was easier and trouble-free to work in collaborative and joint groups since it was not necessary to re-organize each other's schedule. Also, students reported that they had choices

to choose from in online learning which they identified as a strength of learning online. Chizmar and Walber (1999) in a study of online learning contexts reported that students had the ability, choice and freedom to choose from different learning experiences which enabled the students to get the right approaches for them to learn online.

In online learning environment, convenience is also reported as an advantage. Poole (2000) in a study about participation of students in online based discussions, it was reported that convenience was an important factor as students were participating in the discussions when it was convenient for them like on weekends. Poole (2000) also reported that students were mostly able to access online learning programs at home through their computers because at home is where it was very convenient to them. Murphy & Collins (1997) also stated that studies by other researchers gave similar results that students in online learning environments read and responded to instructors' comments online like early in the morning or late in the evening when it was convenient to the students.

### 2.3 Brand image

A brand is a design, a feature, a name, a symbol, a term that is used to identify a particular good or service as distinct from other goods and services (Aaker, 1996). Brand image concept is very significant to consumer behavior as Aaker and Keller (1990) argued that brand image is important in a marketing program as it serves as a foundation to marketing and also play a crucial role in building long term brand equity. Levy (1978) described brand image as a collection of ideas and imaginations in people's minds about a brand which is the sum total of their knowledge about the brand which may be from a point of interaction or not and hence influences how they approach the brand. Hsieh (2002) claimed that in building a brand, people identify how a brand benefits them economically, symbolically or as a utility. Manhas (2010) reported that how a brand is seen from a market's position is not necessarily as a result of representation of brand image perception.

## 2.4 Factors that influence students' online learning experiences

Online learning experiences for students are influenced by several factors. Song, Singleton, Hill and Koh's (2004) in a study about perceptions of students in online learning environments found out several challenges that students face like lack of online community and sense of belonging, challenges in getting clarification and instructions and technical challenges among others. Howland & Moore (2002) identified learner characteristics that influence students online learning experiences while Clark, (2002), Dwyer, (2003), and Song et al., (2004) identified design of the learning environment as a factor that influences students' online learning experiences as discussed below.

### 2.4.1 Learner characteristics that influence students' experiences

Students' way of learning is affected by the characteristics of the student, which in turn impact on their experiences. Howland & Moore (2002) reported that students with positivity in their online learning perceptions were the students with characteristics of constructivist students. These positive minded students were independent, proactive in their learning and responsible. On the contrary, students who recorded negative online learning perceptions had expectations for information and program structure as campus going students. These students indicated that they needed more feedback and structure from the instructor. To them, the instructors were neglecting and abandoning them by not communicating effectively and giving feedback (Howland & Moore, 2002).

Garrison, Cleveland-Innes and Fung (2004) in their study about on online students' role adjustment stated that student saw variance in online learning as compared to the face to face learning and therefore their role changed in this context hence online learning should be considered as internally oriented and more cognitive to students. Garrison et al., (2004) also reported that students in online learning contexts must be more responsible, adjust to the new

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learning environment, incorporate ideas, participate fully, practice their new online skills and cultivate personalized curiosity in order attain success and accomplishment in online learning.

### 2.4.2   Learning Environment that influence students' experiences

Design of the online environment is an important factor that influences students 'experiences. Clark (2002) stated that quality of the designed content influenced student learning experiences. He explained that content in online learning ought to be distinct, meaningful, personal, organized and vivid so as to grow retention of the students.

According to Dwyer (2003), in online learning, the main primary means used to communicate is text. The text is in the conventional paper format, in different media and online platforms. The texts do not exist in isolation but within contexts. The teaching styles and studying objectives are examples of context where text is found. Dwyer (2003) claimed that effective communication cannot be dependent on text only between instructors and students with minimal experiences. Effective of communication through the text may be improved through visuals like images, symbols, diagrams, illustrations, graphs, tables and so on. Better meaning is portrayed through image than in words in text communication.

Online learning may take advantage of including visuals like animations, photographs, videos and other graphics to enhance learning as Clark (2002) said that a picture will explain better than a thousand words.  Dwyer (2003) in the study about effectiveness of online learning via text, found out that including visuals in online learning was recommended to be effective, but the visuals had to be related to learning objectives of the program.

Thurmond et al., (2002) in the study about students' satisfaction in online learning environment found out that students reported being more satisfied in their learning when the learning environment composed of different means of communication other than text only. Virtual online learning context that includes chat groups, online conferences, emails, online discussions has more impact on student satisfaction compared to learning through text

communication only. Song et al., (2004) also asserted that design of the online program is an essential component of online learning together with easiness of use of technology in online learning, attitude and motivation of the student and time management.

## 2.5    Theoretical Framework

Theoretical framework is a paradigm that explains how a study is carried out, guides analysis of the study and how the study is interpreted (Glesne, 2011). It explains past proven theories and how they apply to a study. Creswell (2009) stated that a paradigm may include the researcher's own worldview. Guba (1990) explained a paradigm as beliefs that guides action. This study was guided by Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and Transactional Distance Theory.

### 2.5.1   Technology Acceptance Model

Technology Acceptance Model states that user satisfaction is determined by the ease of use and the usefulness of technology. Arbaugh (2000) carried out a research using Technology Acceptance Model and reported that ease of use and the usefulness of technology reflected positively on the satisfaction of students in online learning. Swan (2001) claimed that students in online learning context were more satisfied when the program structure was easy and when the structure was consistent. The level of interaction between the instructors and the students, students amongst students, student and content was also reported to be a factor that led to student satisfaction. Carr and Hagel (2008) in a study to find out students perception of quality in hybrid courses (combining online learning and traditional learning) in Australia, reported that student satisfaction increased due to increased activity in online interaction. In this study, the ease of use of technology by students in online learning and the usefulness from technology brought about by online learning affect students perceptions of online learning, thus their view of brand image of their learning institution.

### 2.5.2   Transactional Distance Theory

According to Moore (1993), when an instructor comes up with decisions, their decisions will lead to autonomy, dialogue and structure. Such decisions could impact learning engagements as well as attainment of intended learning outcomes. This theory involves analyzing online learning which consists of attending to dialogue between the instructors and the students, structure of the learning content and students' autonomy. Moore (1993) insisted that the above factors are different from technological factors which focus on learning and teaching behaviors between the instructors and the students.  The assumption to this theory is that online learning is different from the conventional way of learning and hence, learning and teaching dynamics are also different.

Moore (1993) explained that teaching is made up of the program's structure and dialogue between the instructor and the students. He further explained that online learning is built on the relationship between program's structure, dialogue between the instructor and the students and student's autonomy. Transactional distance theory explains the interaction among instructors, students and program structure and attempts to give a reason how this interaction impacts on online learning context.

Moore (1993) stated that online learning is recognized by the arrangement or 'transaction' which happens despite there being distance between the instructors and students. In studying the interactive extent of online learning, Moore identified three levels of interaction which are: faculty to student interaction, student to content interaction and student to student interaction.

### 2.5.2.1 Faculty-Student Interaction

Moore (1993) indicated that dialogue is a crucial factor of online learning. He outlined dialogue as being developed between instructors and students through their interactions and these interactions may have positive qualities while other interactions may not have.  Moore reported that interaction between the faculty– students is influenced by learning philosophy, program

subject matter, the learning environment and personality of the student. He stated that just like in conventional way of learning, communication too could be one way in online learning. However, he explained that being dependent on one-way of communication resulted to deepening of the distance between the instructors and the students which led to less desirable learning experiences. Decreasing distance between the instructors and students, then, implied that communication be controlled.

Tomei (2006) also agreed that faculty–student interaction was essential as it played a crucial role in forming students' attitudes on online learning. Bollinger and Martindale (2004) explained faculty– student interaction as the single most compelling component in influencing the satisfaction of students in learning online. Swan (2001) reported that students who interacted more with their instructors during learning indicated higher satisfaction levels with the learning program than students who had minimal interaction with the instructors. Mupinga, Nora, & Yaw, (2006) in their study of students in online courses reported that 83% of the students expected availability of instructors when they needed them and regular and prompt feedback from their instructors. Sanders & Hirshbuhl, (2007) in their study of online learning in a Mid-Western University indicated that program structure of dialogue between instructors and students foretold satisfaction of students in their online learning programs.

### 2.5.2.2 Student-Content Interaction

A program outline shows how the program is flexible or rigid, the objectives of the program, teaching style that will be used and the evaluation methods that will be used (Moore, 1993). Students expectations are influenced by the learning encounters they will experience from the program and this is all directly depended on the structure of the program. Communication during the learning period is also dependent on the program structure as this indicates how much communication, dialogue or interaction the course allows (Moore, 1993).Programs that

are complexly structured allow little or no dialogue and therefore do not response to students input adequately (Moore, 1993).

Content and student interaction is the process of interacting with content intellectually by the students which leads to change in the students understanding of content, students' perspective of the students mind and is characterized by the defining feature of education (Moore, 1993). Assignments, quizzes, discussions, presentations and so on constitute the program's content (Reisetter et al., 2005). As claimed by Moore and Kearsley (2005), students' perceptions of their learning experiences is structured by the flexibility or rigidity of the program content.

### 2.5.2.3 Student-Student Interaction

Dobbs et al., (2009) claims that many studies have been carried out about online learning structures, but few have captured the aspect of student to student interaction. Traditionally, student to student interaction happened one on one. In online learning, interaction is via the internet through platforms like discussion boards, emails, document sharing devices, podcasts, skype and so on (Jackson et al., 2010). Residences are necessary in some institutions so that students can assemble and physically meet at specific locations in order to communicate with their peers, faculty administrators or to attend to seminars.

**2.6 Conceptual Framework**

```
┌─────────────────────────┐                    ┌─────────────────────────┐
│   Independent variable   │  ═══════════>      │    Dependent variable    │
│                         │         ▲           │                         │
│    Audience perception   │         │           │       Brand image        │
└─────────────────────────┘         │           └─────────────────────────┘
                                     │
                                     │
                          ┌──────────────────────────┐
                          │  Intervening variables    │
                          │                          │
                          │  Convenience              │
                          │                          │
                          │  Flexibility              │
                          │                          │
                          │  Lack of physical interactions │
                          │                          │
                          │  Lack of immediacy of responses │
                          │                          │
                          │  Effectiveness of communication │
                          │                          │
                          │  Technical support        │
                          └──────────────────────────┘
```
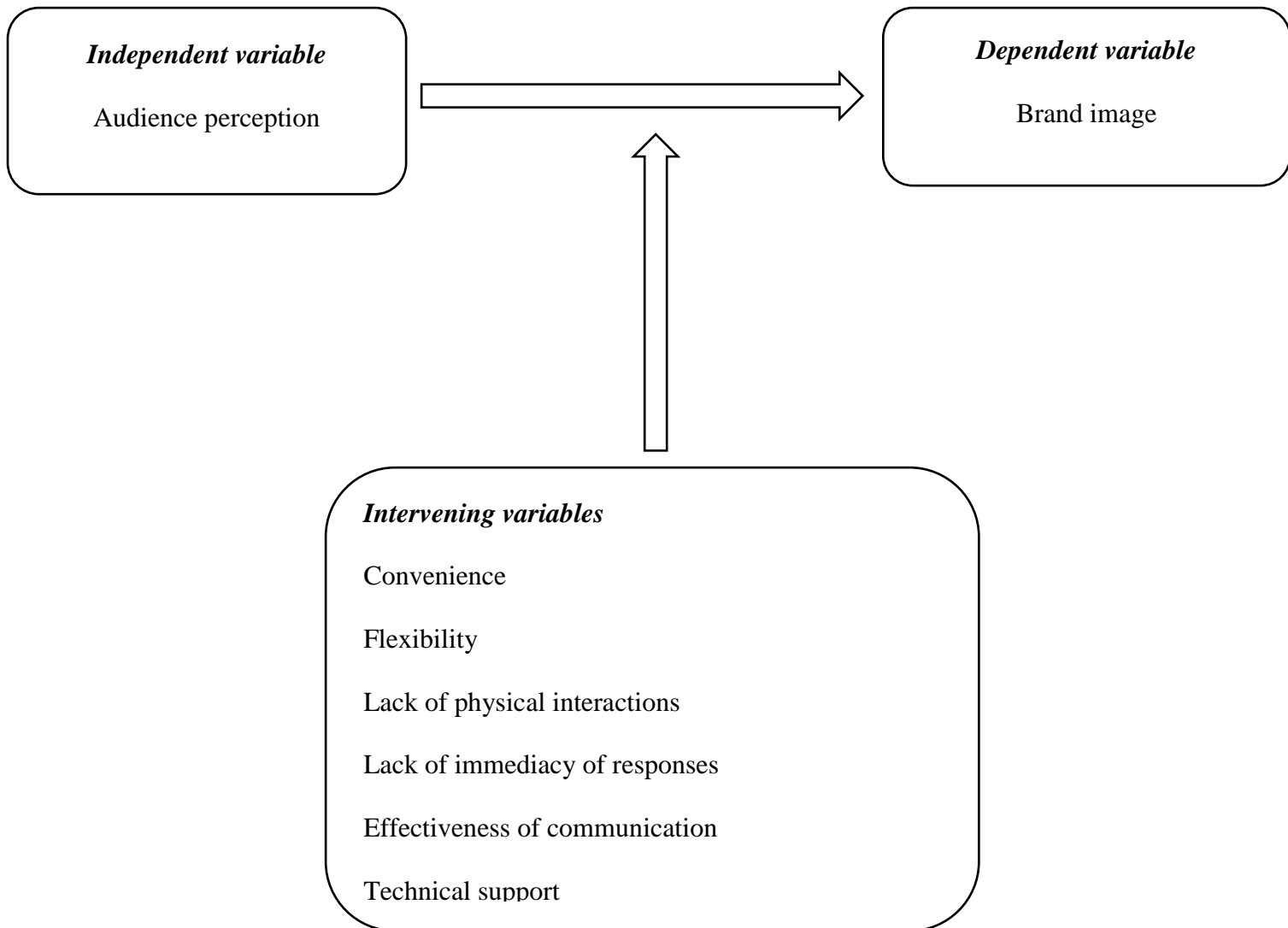
*Figure 2.1 – Conceptual framework*

Figure 2.1 shows that audience perception is the independent variable that causes change in the brand image which is the dependent variable. Intervening factors between the audience perception and brand image include convenience, flexibility, lack of physical interactions, lack of immediacy of responses, effectiveness of online learning platforms, technical support.

# CHAPTER 3

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### 3.0     Introduction

The chapter presents research methodology that includes the research design, research methodology, the study area, target population, sampling design, sample size, data collection method, data collection tool, data presentation, data analysis, validity and reliability.

### 3.1     Research design

Research design is the procedure, framework or strategy adopted by the researcher to present the data (Babbie & Mouton, 2010). A descriptive research design was employed in this study to enable the researcher to explore factors of the study within limited time and without manipulating the variables (Kothari, 2014).

This design is most suitable as it assists in formulating knowledge and provide solutions to compelling problems as it seeks to find facts.  Descriptive research design also provides clear information from the large population sample. Quantitative data was gathered from a sample of undergraduate students at University of Nairobi, Main Campus for analysis and derivation of results.

### 3.2   Research Methodology

This study adopted a quantitative method in collecting and analyzing of data. The study relied on collection and analysis of numerical data in describing, explaining, predicting, and controlling variables (Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2009).

### 3.3   Study Area

The study was done at the University of Nairobi, Main Campus where the University has continued to offer online courses in many departments even when other universities have slowly resumed to physical trainings after the Covid 19 pandemic.

### 3.4      Target Population

Target population refers to specific group that the researcher is interested in studying, the specific group has similar characteristics and the researcher wishes to get conclusions from (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2013). This study's target population comprised of undergraduate students of University of Nairobi, Main Campus. The data on the number of undergraduate students at the University of Nairobi, Main Campus was provided by the Office of Academic Affairs.

### 3.5      Sampling Design and Sample Size

#### 3.5.1   Sampling Design

Sampling design is the method used to select a representative sample from the target population and includes an estimation technique or formula for computing the sample (Kothari, 2014). The study used stratified random sampling to collect the survey data from the sample.

#### 3.5.2   Sample Size

Chandler (2018) explains sample size as small portion of the population selected for data collection and analysis. The study sample size was 383 from the 100,000 undergraduate student population of the University of Nairobi, Main Campus as determined by Krejcie and Morgan (1970) pyramid displayed in Table 3.1. The data on undergraduate students' numbers across the different faculties at Main Campus was given by the Office of Academic Affairs at Main Campus.

| | Confidence level = 95% | | | Confidence level = 99% | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Margin of error | | | Margin of error | | |
| Population size | 5% | 2,5% | 1% | 5% | 2,5% | 1% |
| 100 | 80 | 94 | 99 | 87 | 96 | 99 |
| 500 | 217 | 377 | 475 | 285 | 421 | 485 |
| 1.000 | 278 | 606 | 906 | 399 | 727 | 943 |
| 10.000 | 370 | 1.332 | 4.899 | 622 | 2.098 | 6.239 |
| 100.000 | 383 | 1.513 | 8.762 | 659 | 2.585 | 14.227 |
| 500.000 | 384 | 1.532 | 9.423 | 663 | 2.640 | 16.055 |
| 1.000.000 | 384 | 1.534 | 9.512 | 663 | 2.647 | 16.317 |

*Table 3.1: Sample Size Determination Table (Source, Krejcie and Morgan, 1970)*

## 3.6    Data Collection Method and Tools

### 3.6.1   Data Collection Methods

According to Rugg and Petre (2010), data collection is the process of preparing, gathering and collecting data. The study employed a quantitative technique to collect data in guideline with the study objectives using a structured questionnaire (Appendix II) to conduct the survey. The researcher administered questionnaires to 383 randomly selected respondents from different faculties at the University of Main Campus.

### 3.6.2   Data Collection Tools

This study used structured questionnaires which were administered to 383 randomly selected respondents from the different faculties at University Nairobi, Main Campus.

## 3.7    Validity and Reliability of Tools

Mugenda and Mugenda (2013) state that validity is the degree or extent to which end results from data analysis represent the variables of a phenomenon being studied. It is research instrument's ability to accurately measure what they ought to measure. The questionnaire was scrutinized by the researcher before sharing with respondents to ensure the ability of the instrument to effectively measure what it is meant to measure, the consistency of measure,

quality of English, appropriateness and comprehensiveness, in order to establish reliability and content validity.

### 3.8  Data Analysis and Presentation

Data analysis using descriptive statistics was done to the bring data together for examination and cleaning during interpretation which is the process of making out sense of the generated data (Greener, 2010). Descriptive statistics was important in presenting direct findings from the field.

Descriptive data analysis was computed and analyzed using IBM Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS), Version 25 and Microsoft Excel. The analysis obtained data in the form of percentages and average values which were used to understand and interpret the results. The presentation of data was done using tables.

### 3.9  Ethical Issues

The study adhered to ethical considerations by undertaking the following measures: A letter of introduction was issued at the Department of Journalism and Mass Communication. A research permit was applied at National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) to conduct the research and collect data for the study. Data collection started on approval after the respondents gave consent. Respondents only filled in the questionnaire at their own free will and those that refused were not coerced. Anonymity and confidentiality of the participants was promised and maintained all through the study. The respondents were informed in advance that the data to be collected was intended for academic work only and not for any other purpose.

# CHAPTER 4

## DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

### 4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis of data in respect to each of the study objectives and interprets them accordingly. The study set out to establish students' perceptions of online learning on the brand image of University of Nairobi, Main Campus. In a descriptive study based on two theoretical theories, Technology Acceptance Model and Transactional Distance Theory, and utilizing primary data collected through questionnaires, the study harnessed quantitative data from sample responses.

The study objectives were: to determine students' perceptions of online learning on the brand image of University of Nairobi, Main Campus; to assess the impact of online learning on the brand image of University of Nairobi, Main Campus; to find out how credibility of online learning affects the brand image of University of Nairobi, Main Campus and to examine how online learning would affect the future brand image of University of Nairobi, Main Campus. This study used descriptive statistics to analyze data, where findings were presented as frequencies (counts) and percentages in tables. Inferences were drawn in relation to the general presentation in the population.

### 4.1 Response Rate

The study targeted population was 383 undergraduate students from the University of Nairobi's Main Campus in the Faculties of Arts and Social Sciences, Built Environment and Design, Business and Management Sciences and Engineering. 383 questionnaires were distributed, out of which 302 were retrieved duly completed responding to the survey translating to a 78.9% response rate, which is acceptable for generalization of the findings; it surpasses the 60%-65% threshold (Fowler, 1984; Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003).

## 4.2.1 Gender of the respondents

*Table 4.1: Gender distributions of respondents*

| Gender | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------|-----------|------------|
| Male | 195 | 64.6 % |
| Female | 107 | 35.4 % |
| Total | 302 | 100% |

Source: Survey data (2022)

From the table above, 195 (64.6%) respondents out of 302 respondents were male while 107 (35.4%) respondents out of 302 respondents were female.

## 4.2.2 Age brackets of the respondents

*Table 4.2: Age distributions of respondents*

| Age bracket | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------|-----------|------------|
| 18-25 | 272 | 90.1% |
| 26-35 | 24 | 7.9% |
| 36-45 | 5 | 1.7% |
| 46-55 | 1 | 0.3% |
| 56 & above | 0 | 0 % |
| Total | 302 | 100% |

Source: Survey data (2022)

Table 4.2 indicates that out of 302 respondents, 272 (90.1%) respondents were under the bracket of 18- 25 years; 24 (7.9%) respondents were under the bracket of 26-35; 5 (1.7%) respondents were in the age bracket of 36-45 while 1 (0.30%) respondents fell under the age bracket of 46-55 and none of the respondents was in the bracket of 56 and above. Evidently, the undergraduate student population at the University of Nairobi is largely youthful, aged 18-

25 years. This reflects the enrollment trends in Kenya where high school leavers begin their undergraduate studies some months after their national KCSE exams results are out.

### 4.2.3 Year of study

*Table 4.3: Year of study of respondents*

| Year of study | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| 1st | 108 | 35.8% |
| 2nd | 51 | 16.9% |
| 3rd | 63 | 20.9% |
| 4th | 40 | 13.2% |
| 5th | 27 | 8.9% |
| 6th | 13 | 4.3% |
| Total | 302 | 100% |

Source: Survey data (2022)

Table 4.3 shows that; out of 302 respondents, 108 (35.8%) respondents were in first year with the least 13 (4.3%) in 6th year and 27 (8.9%) in the 5th year being the senior students at the University.

### 4.2.4 Faculty of the respondents

*Table 4.4: Faculty of the respondents*

| Faculty | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Arts & Social Sciences | 141 | 46.7% |
| Built Environment & Design | 43 | 14.2% |
| Business & Management Sciences | 67 | 22.2% |
| Engineering | 51 | 16.9% |
| **Total** | **302** | **100%** |

Source: Survey data (2022)

Table 4.4 above shows that more students are in the Arts and Social Sciences than in the natural science-based technical programs like Engineering and Built Environment with 141 (46.7%) in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, and 67 (22.2%) in the Faculty of Business and Management Sciences. The least representation is in the Faculty of Built Environment and Design at 43 (14.2%) and in the Faculty of Engineering at 51 (16.9%) respectively.

## 4.3 Students' perceptions of online learning on the brand image

### 4.3.1 Extent of students' agreement on students' perceptions

*Table 4.5: Extent of students' perceptions*

| Response | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Strongly agree | 173 | 33.9% |
| Agree | 62 | 17.9% |
| Strongly disagree | 18 | 14.6% |
| Disagree | 34 | 19.7% |
| Undecided | 15 | 13.9% |
| Total | 302 | 100% |

Source: Survey data (2022)

From table 4.5 above; out of 302 respondents, 173 (33.9%) respondents strongly agreed that students' perceptions about online learning had effect on the brand image of University of Nairobi, Main Campus followed by those who agree at 62 (17.9%). Some respondents were undecided on whether students' perceptions of online learning had an effect on the brand image of University of Nairobi, Main Campus at 15 (13.9%) while those disagreed and strongly disagreed were at 34 (19.7%) and 18 (14.6%) respectively. That most of the students strongly agreed that perceptions students about online learning had effect on the brand image agreed with Neely & Tucker (2010) sentiments that in online learning context, students were anticipated to be more active and engaged towards online learning and that program outcomes

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are heavily dependent on the students' attitude with regard to online learning. Students should be motivated to be more active when learning online, participate in peer student to student reviews and engage in activities that inculcate growth of problem-solving skills and team building (Chickering & Gamson, 1983).

**4.3.2 Extent of students' agreement on convenience and flexibility**

*Table 4.6: Extent of convenience and flexibility*

| Response | Frequency | Percentage |
|----------|-----------|------------|
| Yes | 212 | 70.2% |
| No | 79 | 26.2% |
| Undecided | 11 | 3.6% |
| Total | 302 | 100% |

Source: Survey data (2022)

Table 4.6 indicates that out of 302 respondents, 212 (70.2%) of the respondents agreed that convenience and flexibility that comes with online learning had effect on the brand image of University of Nairobi Main Campus. This aligned with Dobbs, Waid and Carmen (2009) who found out that convenience of online learning and flexibility captivated students to joining and enrolling for these programs.

Petrides (2002) reported that students in online learning programs claimed it was easier and trouble-free to work in collaborative and joint groups since it was not necessary to re-organize each other's schedule. Also, students reported that they had choices to choose from in online learning which they identified as a strength of online learning. Chizmar and Walber (1999) in a study of online learning contexts reported that students had the ability, choice and freedom to choose from different learning experiences which enabled the students to get the right approaches for them to learn online.

In online learning environment, convenience is also reported as an advantage. Poole (2000) in a study about participation of students in online based discussions, it was reported that

convenience was an important factor as students were participating in the discussions when it was convenient for them like on weekends. Poole (2000) also reported that students were mostly able to access online learning programs at home through their computers because at home is where it was very convenient to them. Murphy & Collins (1997) also stated that studies by other researchers gave similar results that students in online learning environments read and responded to instructors' comments online like early in the morning or late in the evening when it was convenient to the students.

### 4.3.3 Extent of students' agreement on students' satisfaction

*Table 4.7: Extent of students' satisfaction*

| Response | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Strongly agree | 176 | 58.3% |
| Agree | 62 | 20.5% |
| Strongly disagree | 10 | 3.3% |
| Disagree | 35 | 11.6% |
| Undecided | 19 | 6.3% |
| Total | 302 | 100% |

Source: Survey data (2022)

Table 4.7 above shows that out of 302 respondents, 176 (58.3%) strongly agreed that students satisfaction towards online learning affected their perceptions of the brand image of University of Nairobi, Main Campus. This is followed by those who agreed at 62 (20.5%). The least number of respondents strongly disagreed at 10 (3.3%) while the undecided and those who disagreed were 19 (6.3%) and 35 (11.6%) respectively.

That the highest percentage of respondents (58.3%) strongly agreed that student's satisfaction towards online learning affected their perceptions of the brand image of University of Nairobi, Main Campus affirmed what Fredericksen, Pickett, Shea, Pelz and Swan (2000) said that

students were more satisfied in their learning programs when they interacted more with the instructors and other students. Also, reliability of technology and technical support received during technical hitches were also reported by students as factors that led to their satisfaction. Flexibility was also stated as a factor to students' satisfaction by those students who enrolled for online learning because of flexibility rather than those students who were in online learning just because they could not find a campus program to enroll in. This implied that students' satisfaction affected their perception of the brand image of their learning institutions.

### 4.3.4 Extent of students' agreement that online learning can promote non-discrimatory learning environment

*Table 4.8: Extent that online learning can promote non-discrimatory learning environment*

| Response | Frequency | Percentage |
|----------|-----------|------------|
| True | 152 | 50.3% |
| Untrue | 113 | 37.4% |
| Don't know | 37 | 12.3% |
| Total | 302 | 100% |

Source: Survey data (2022)

Table 4.8 shows that out of 302 respondents, 152 (50.3%) felt that online learning promoted non discrimatory learning environment since the instructors and students do not meet physically. This aligned with Palloff and Pratt (1999) who argued that online learning can promote non- discriminatory and non-biased learning environment because the instructors and learners do not meet physically, hence, cannot tell the gender, race or physical features of one another, online learning provides a learning and teaching environment that is bias-free for the instructors and the students. That a bigger number of respondents 113 (37.4%) felt it was untrue that learning online can promote non discrimatory learning environment negated the above claim. This is because some students felt isolated and distanced from one another and the faculty as Woods (2002) said that students in online learning environments reported that they

felt isolated from the faculty as well as from other students. This indicated mixed perception by students in online learning context hence influenced their perceptions about online learning, therefore, on the brand image of their learning institutions.

## 4.4 Impact of online learning on brand image

### 4.4.1 Extent of students' agreement on lack of physical interaction

*Table 4.9: Extent of lack of physical interactions*

| Response | Frequency | Percentage |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Strongly agree | 168 | 55.6% |
| Agree | 111 | 36.8% |
| Strongly disagree | 8 | 2.6% |
| Disagree | 5 | 1.7% |
| Undecided | 10 | 3.3% |
| Total | 302 | 100% |

Source: Survey data (2022)

Table 4.9 shows that out of 302 respondents, 168 (55.6%) of the respondents strongly agreed that brand image of University of Nairobi, Main Campus could be impacted by lack of physical interactions between students -instructors, students- students, students and faculty. Those who agreed to the above statement were also many at 111 (36.8%) confirming the same that brand image of University of Nairobi, Main Campus could be impacted by lack of physical interactions between students and lecturers, students and students, students and faculty. Those that were undecided were 10 (3.3%) while those who strongly disagreed and disagreed were at 8 (2.6%) and 5 (1.7%) respectively. The above findings confirmed what Vonderwell (2003) reported that students reported lacking connection with their instructors particularly one on one relationship with their instructors. He reported the absence of sense of online community and students feeling isolated from other students, instructors or from the faculty as another

weakness of online learning contexts. This is also reflected by Woods (2002) a study of online interaction between instructors and students where it was reported that students in online learning environments felt isolated from the faculty and from other students in the learning program. Lack of physical interactions affected students' perceptions of online learning hence had impact on the brand image of their learning institutions.

**4.4.2 Extent of students' agreement on lack of immediacy of responses**

*Table 4:10: Extent of lack of immediacy of responses*

| Response | Frequency | Percentage |
|----------|-----------|------------|
| Yes | 274 | 90.7% |
| No | 28 | 9.3% |
| Total | 302 | 100% |

Source: Survey data (2022)

Table 4.10  indicates that out of 302 respondents, 274 (90.7%) agreed that  lack of immediacy of responses in online learning had impact on the brand image of University of Nairobi, Main Campus while 28 (9.3%) disagreed. That a large number agreed that lack of immediacy of responses in online learning had impact on the brand image of University of Nairobi, Main Campus confirmed what Petrides (2002) said in a study about students' perspectives of online learning indicated that some students recorded lack of and absence of immediacy in responses from their instructors when learning online unlike in conventional face to face setup. This is mostly in asynchronous learning set-ups, where some students were forced to slow down and wait for other students to study and answer posts or emails. This had impact on their perceptions about online learning, which, in turn impacted on how they perceived the brand image of their learning institution. Hara and Kling (1999) in a study about online learning program at a United States university reported that students said they felt frustrated due to lack of immediacy of responses from their instructors. Vonderwell (2003) also agreed that lack of immediate feedback from instructors was a disadvantage of online learning. One of

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the students reported that it could take hours or even a day or more for one to get an answer or clarification to their question from the instructor.

### 4.4.3 Extent of students' agreement that online learning promoted students' critical thinking and reflection

*Table 4.11: Extent that online learning promoted students' critical thinking and reflection*

| Response | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Strongly agree | 143 | 47.3% |
| Agree | 111 | 36.8% |
| Strongly disagree | 13 | 4.3% |
| Disagree | 16 | 5.3% |
| Undecided | 19 | 6.3% |
| Total | 302 | 100% |

Source: Survey data (2022)

Table 4.11 indicates that out of 302 respondents, 143 (47.3%) strongly agreed that online learning promoted students' critical thinking, deep thinking and reflection followed by those who agreed at 111 (36.8%). The above findings echoed Petrides (2002) who conducted a study to examine students' perspectives of online learning and reported that some students said that they developed deep thinking of the subject courses when writing responses in comparison to when they were giving oral feedback. The students indicated that they continually reflected on other students' reflections as a result of the permanent, public showcasing of their online discussions on their websites. One student reported that one was forced to deeply think critically about the course they were studying when they were giving their responses in writing. Another student agreed with the claims showing that online learning allowed students in online learning environment to reflect more than in the conventional classroom set-up. This implied that students developed critical thinking skills, deep thinking and reflection which impacted on their perceptions of online learning and in turn affected their view of brand image of learning

institutions. Further, Vonderwell (2003) in a study about students' perceptions about online learning reported that students in the online learning environment said that they wrote their ideas very carefully. For example, Vonderwell (2003) indicated that one of the students said that reflection was necessary since during the discussion questions one had to think deeply and reflect not just write answers aimlessly.

**4.4.4 Extent of students' agreement that technology skills increased among students' in online learning context**

*Table 4.12: Extent that technology skills increased among students' in online learning context*

| Response | Frequency | Percentage |
|----------|-----------|------------|
| Yes | 267 | 88.4% |
| No | 13 | 4.3% |
| Don't know | 22 | 7.3% |
| Total | 302 | 100% |

Source: Survey data (2022)

Table 4.12 indicates that out of 302 respondents, 267 (88.4%) of respondents agreed that technology skills are said to have increased among students in online learning context and this had impact on how students perceived the brand image of University of Nairobi, Main Campus. Those who disagreed and didn't know were 13 (4.3%) and 22 (7.3%) respectively. That a high number agreed that technology skills are said to have increased among students in online learning context and this could have had impact on how students perceived the brand image of University of Nairobi, Main Campus agreed with Donlevy (2003) who said that online learning may assist learning institutions to develop curricular programs that are less costly and may help students obtain crucial technology skills that would help them to enhance their marketability. These findings implied that students in online learning context were getting technologically upgraded which impacted their perceptions about online learning, therefore, on the brand image

of their learning institution. Fredericksen, Pickett, Shea, Pelz and Swan (2000) in a study about satisfaction of students in online learning found out that reliability of technology and technical support received during technical hitches were reported by students as factors that led to their satisfaction.

## 4.5 Credibility of online learning on brand image

### 4.5.1 Extent of students' agreement on effectiveness of online learning

*Table 4.13: Extent of effectiveness of online learning*

| Response | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Strongly agree | 154 | 51 .0% |
| Agree | 115 | 38.1% |
| Strongly disagree | 16 | 5.3% |
| Disagree | 13 | 4.3% |
| Undecided | 4 | 1.3% |
| Total | 302 | 100% |

Source: Survey data (2022)

Table 4.13 shows that out of 302 respondents, 154 (51%) strongly agree that effectiveness of online learning has influence on students' perception that could affect the brand image of University of Nairobi, Main Campus followed by those who agreed at 115 (38.1%). Those who disagreed were 13 (4.3%) while the undecided and those who strongly disagreed were 4 (1.3%) and 16 (5.3%) respectively.

That most of the students strongly agreed that effectiveness of online learning had influence on students' perceptions that could affect the brand image of University of Nairobi, Main Campus validated results of other similar studies which pointed that this mode of learning was flexible in terms of schedule (Petrides, 2002 and Schrum, 2002), enabled students to reflect on and write carefully their ideas (Vonderwell, 2003), made it easy to work in joint and collaborative

groups (Petrides, 2002), offered variety of choices for learners (Chizmar & Walber, 1999) and enabled participation in online discussions at one's convenience (Poole, 2000).

**4.5.2 Extent of students' agreement on diverse online learning platforms**

*Table 4.14: Extent of diverse online learning platforms*

| Response | Frequency | Percentage |
|----------|-----------|------------|
| Yes | 253 | 83.8% |
| No | 22 | 7.3% |
| Not sure | 27 | 8.9% |
| Total | 302 | 100% |

Source: Survey data (2022)

Table 4.14 indicates that out of 302 respondents, a high number of 253 (83.3%) agreed that diverse online learning platforms that gave students choices of learning experiences to choose from could have impacted on the credibility of online learning hence influence the brand image of University of Nairobi, Main Campus. Those who disagreed were 22 (7.3%) and those not sure were 27 (8.9%) respectively. That a large percentage of the respondents agreed that diverse online learning platforms that gave students choices of learning experiences to choose from could have impacted on the credibility of online learning hence influence the brand image of University of Nairobi, Main Campus aligned with Chizmar and Walber (1999) who indicated that students had the ability to choose and freely pick from different learning experiences which enabled the students to get the right approaches for them to learn online. This implied that students had choices of learning platforms to choose from and hence they would assess the credibility of online learning. Therefore, this would influence their perceptions of online learning and impacted on how they perceived the brand image of their learning institutions.

**4.5.3 Extent of students' agreement on timeliness of online learning feedback**

*Table 4.15: Extent of online learning feedback*

| Response | Frequency | Percentage |
|----------|-----------|------------|

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Very sure | 178 | 58.9% |
| Sure | 103 | 34.1% |
| Not sure | 21 | 7.0% |
| Total | 302 | 100% |

Table 4.15 shows that out of 302 respondents, 178 (58.9%) were very sure that timeliness of online learning feedback affected the brand image of University of Nairobi, Main Campus, followed by those who sure at 103 (34.1%). Those not sure were 21 (7.0%). That more students were very sure followed by those sure that timeliness of online learning feedback affected the brand image of University of Nairobi, Main Campus agreed with Lee (2010) who pointed out that timely and prompt feedback to students from instructors was important to the satisfaction of students learning online which the above findings affirmed. Thus, timeliness of online learning feedback would affect how students perceived the brand image of their learning institutions. Further,

Petrides (2002) in a study about students' perspectives of online learning indicated that some students recorded lack of and absence of immediacy in responses from their instructors when learning online unlike in conventional face to face setup. This is mostly in asynchronous learning set-ups, where some students were forced to slow down and wait for other students to study and answer posts or emails. Hara and Kling (1999) in a study about online learning program at a United States university also reported that students said they felt frustrated due to lack of immediacy of responses from their instructors. Vonderwell (2003) also agreed that lack of immediate feedback from instructors was a disadvantage of online learning. One of the students reported that it could take hours or even a day or more for one to get an answer or clarification to their question from the instructor.

### 4.5.4 Extent of students' agreement on availability of technical support offered

*Table 4.16: Extent of availability of technical support*

| Response | Frequency | Percentage |
|----------|-----------|------------|
| Very sure | 153 | 50.7% |
| Sure | 114 | 37.7% |
| Not sure | 35 | 11.6% |
| Total | 302 | 100% |

Source: Survey data (2022)

Table 4.16 indicates that out of 302 respondents, 153 (50.7%) felt very sure that credibility of online learning would be affected by the availability of technical support offered to students which would have effect on the brand image of University of Nairobi, Main Campus. Those who were sure were also a significant number at 114 (37.3%) while those not sure were 35 (11.6%). The above findings seconded that support services are also a predicting factor for satisfaction of students learning online (Lee, 2010). Also, satisfaction of students' is influenced by the availability of flexibility in a learning program, social presence during learning, program technology and availability of technical support (McGorry, 2003). According to Lorenzo and Moore (2002), satisfaction of students is a composition of timely, responsive and individually curated services and support, academic and administrative support services, high quality learning outcomes and student interaction and collaboration with instructors, other students and the faculty. This is also echoed by Fredericksen, Pickett, Shea, Pelz and Swan (2000) who said that reliability of technology and technical support received during technical hitches were also reported by students as factors that led to their satisfaction. Therefore, technical support offered to students affected the credibility of learning online, therefore, affected their perceptions of brand image of the learning institution.

## 4.6 How online learning would affect future brand image

### 4.6.1 Extent of students' agreement that online learning could change the number of programs offered in future

*Table 4.17: Extent that online learning could change the number of programs offered in future*

| Response | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Strongly agree | 161 | 53.3% |
| Agree | 103 | 34.1% |
| Strongly disagree | 8 | 2.7% |
| Disagree | 13 | 4.3% |
| Undecided | 17 | 5.6% |
| Total | 302 | 100% |

Source: Survey data (2022)

Table 4.17 above indicates that out of 302 respondents, 161 (53.3%) strongly agreed that online learning could lead to change of the number of programs offered by the university in future which could affect the brand image of University of Nairobi, Main Campus followed by those who agreed at 103 (34.1%). Those who disagreed were 13 (4.3%), undecided at 17 (5.6%) and those who strongly disagreed were 8 (2.7%). The findings above validated Donlevy (2003) who said that online learning may assist learning institutions to expand curricular programs. Due to introduction of other learning programs in the online learning context, perceptions of students' about online learning may be impacted and hence, how they view brand image of learning institution affected also.

### 4.6.2 Extent of students' agreement that online learning would affect future students' enrollment

*Table 4.18: Extent that online learning would affect future students' enrollment*

| Response | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Strongly agree | 154 | 51.0% |

| Response | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Agree | 118 | 39.1% |
| Strongly disagree | 7 | 2.3% |
| Disagree | 11 | 3.6% |
| Undecided | 12 | 4.0% |
| Total | 302 | 100% |

Source: Survey data (2022)

Table 4.18 indicates that out of 302 respondents, 154 (51%) strongly agreed that students' enrolment in the future would be affected by online learning hence affect the brand image of University of Nairobi, Main Campus followed by those who agreed at 118 (39.1%). Student enrolment according to Moore (2005) is influenced by access, cost effectiveness of learning, institutional commitment especially on quality, faculty preparedness, learning effectiveness and student expectations and satisfaction. The above findings concurred with Rodriguez et al., (2008) who argued that for higher learning institutions to sustain students' enrollment, it would depend on the brand image of the learning institutions as a result of learning experiences and perceptions of the students. Also, that more students strongly agreed that students enrollment in the future would be affected hence affecting the brand image reflected on other factors like lack of immediacy in getting responses (Hara and Kling, 1999), isolation from faculty and other students (Woods, 2002), flexibility (Petrides, 2002), convenience (Poole's, 2002). These factors would impact on students' enrollment either positively or negatively, hence, also, impact on the brand image of the learning institution.

### 4.6.3 Extent of students' agreement that online learning could have future financial implications

*Table 4.19: Extent that online learning could have future financial implications*

| Response | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Strongly agree | 141 | 46.7% |
| Agree | 109 | 36.1% |

48

| Response | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Strongly disagree | 14 | 4.6% |
| Disagree | 17 | 5.6% |
| Undecided | 21 | 7.0% |
| Total | 302 | 100% |

Source: Survey data (2022)

Table 4.19 indicates that out of 302 respondents, a high percentage of 46.7% (141) strongly agreed that online learning could have future financial implications that could influence the brand image of University of Nairobi, Main Campus. Those who agreed were also significant at 109 (36.1%). The respondents who strongly disagreed were 14 (4.6%) while those who were undecided and disagreed were 21 (7.0%) and 17 (5.6%) respectively. That a large percentage of students strongly agreed and agreed that online learning would have future financial implications that would influence the brand image of University of Nairobi, Main Campus agreed with Donlevy (2003) who said that online learning may assist learning institutions to develop curricular programs that are less costly. The reduction in cost of studying in online learning context in the future would imply a shift in students' perceptions which would translate to a shift on their view of brand image.

**4.6.4 Extent of students' agreement that the University could become fully fledged online learning institution in the future.**

*Table 4.20: Extent that the University could become fully fledged online learning institution in the future*

| Response | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Strongly agree | 67 | 22.2% |
| Agree | 51 | 16.9% |
| Strongly disagree | 72 | 23.8% |
| Disagree | 43 | 14.3% |
| Undecided | 69 | 22.8% |
| Total | 302 | 100% |

Source: Survey data

Table 4.20 shows that out of 302 respondents, students had mixed reactions on whether University of Nairobi, Main Campus would become fully fledged online learning institution in the future hence influencing its brand image. 67 (22.2%) strongly agreed while those who strongly disagreed were 72 (23.8%). The mixed results implied that the faculty of Arts and Business and Management Sciences tend to align more to online learning due to the theoretical nature of the courses in these faculties which may not require as much physical interactions as technical and practical-oriented courses in the faculties of Engineering or Built Environment.

# CHAPTER 5

## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 5.0 Introduction

This chapter provides summary of findings from the study, conclusions, recommendations and suggested areas for future study. This study sought to establish students' perception of online learning on the brand image of institutions of higher learning in Kenya, case of University of Nairobi, Main Campus. The objectives were: to determine students' perceptions of online

learning on the brand image of University of Nairobi, Main Campus; to assess the impact of online learning on the brand image of University of Nairobi, Main Campus; to find out how credibility of online learning affects the brand image of University of Nairobi, Main Campus and to examine how online learning will affect the future brand image of University of Nairobi, Main Campus.

## 5.1 Summary of Findings

Below is a presentation of the findings as per the objectives:

### 5.1.1 Students' perceptions of online learning on the brand image

Students strongly agreed that perceptions of students about online learning affected the brand image of learning institutions. Students agreed that convenience and flexibility from online learning had effects on perceptions of students about online learning therefore affecting the brand image of learning institutions. Students agreed that student satisfaction from online learning had effects on students' perceptions of online learning hence on the brand image of learning institutions. Students had mixed reactions on the claim that online learning would promote non-discrimatory learning environment.

### 5.1.2 Impact of online learning on the brand image

Students agreed that lack of physical interaction in online learning impacted on students' perceptions of online learning, hence, also, impacted on the brand image of learning institution. Students agreed that lack of immediacy of responses in online learning context had impact on students' perceptions of online learning therefore, also impacted on the brand image of learning institutions. Students strongly agreed that online learning promoted students' critical thinking, deep thinking and reflection which impacted on their perceptions about learning online, in turn, on the brand image of their learning institutions. Students agreed that technology skills are said

to have increased among the students' in online learning context which impacted on the brand image of learning institutions.

### 5.1.3 Credibility of online learning on the brand image

Students strongly agreed that effectiveness of online learning impacted on credibility of online learning which had effects on students' perceptions of online learning hence on the brand image of learning institutions. Students agreed that diverse online learning platforms that gave students choices of learning experiences to choose from impacted on the credibility of online learning, which in turn, impacted on students perception of online learning, hence, had influence on the brand image of learning institutions. Students agreed that timeliness of online learning feedback had effects on the brand image of learning institution. Students agreed that availability of technical support given to students affected the credibility of online learning which influenced their perceptions of brand image of learning institutions.

### 5.1.4 How online learning would affect the future brand image

Students strongly agreed that online learning would lead to change of the number of programs offered by the University in the future which would affect the brand image of the learning institution. Students strongly agreed that students' enrolment in the future would be affected by online learning hence affect brand image of the University. Students strongly agreed that online learning would have future financial implications that would influence the brand image of the learning institution. There were mixed reactions on whether University of Nairobi, Main Campus would become fully fledged online learning institution in the future which would affect the brand image of the learning institution.

### 5.2 Conclusions

Below is a presentation of the conclusions as per the objectives:

**5.2.1 Students' perceptions of online learning on the brand image**

Perceptions of students' about learning online had effects on brand image of learning institutions. Convenience and flexibility from online learning had effects on perceptions of students learning online, therefore, affected the brand image of learning institutions. Student satisfaction from online learning had effects on perceptions of students about online learning hence on the brand image of learning institutions. Whether online learning would promote non-discrimatory learning environment was received by students with mixed reactions.

**5.2.2 Impact of online learning on the brand image**

Lack of physical interaction in online learning impacted on students' perceptions of online learning hence, on the brand image of learning institution. Lack of immediacy of responses in online learning context impacted on students' perceptions of online learning therefore, on the brand image of learning institutions. Online learning promoted students' critical thinking, deep thinking and reflection which impacted on their perceptions of learning online, in turn, on the brand image of learning institutions. Technology skills are said to have increased among students' in online learning context which impacted on the brand image of learning institutions.

**5.2.3 Credibility of online learning on the brand image**

Online learning effectiveness impacted on credibility of online learning which had effects on students' perceptions about online learning hence, on brand image of learning institutions. Diverse online learning platforms that gave students choices of learning experiences to choose from impacted on credibility of online learning which in turn, impacted on perceptions students about learning online hence, influenced brand image of learning institutions. Timeliness of online learning feedback had effects on the brand image of learning institution. Availability of technical support given to students affected the credibility of online learning which influenced their view of brand image of learning institutions.

**5.2.4 How online learning would affect the future brand image**

Online learning would lead to change of the number of programs offered by the University in the future which would affect the brand image of the learning institution. Students' enrollment in the future would be affected by online learning which would affect brand image of the University. Online learning would have future financial implications that would impact on the brand image of the learning institution. Whether University of Nairobi, Main Campus would become fully fledged online learning institution in the future which would affect the brand image of the learning institution was received with mixed reactions from the students.

## 5.3 Recommendations

The researcher suggests the below recommendations:

a) The University of Nairobi Main Campus IT department to be more accessible to students and be prompt in responding to the technological challenges faced by online learning students through providing technical support.

b) The students to be introduced into a scheme for procuring functional gadgets at subsidized rates and also be provided with subsidized data bundles to facilitate their access to online learning without undue obstacles.

c) The government of Kenya to mainstream and promote the use of ICT development in schools right from elementary level to tertiary level to equip students with the relevant technological skills as they move up the academic ladder.

d) Engage and train the students on the improvements necessary to improve access and quality of online learning in order to improve their attitude towards online learning through amplifying the benefits of online learning.

e) Train online course instructors effectively so that the quality they transfer to students to be top notch because how the instructors deliver content to the students affects not

only students understanding but also the overall quality of education and students attitudes towards online learning.

f) Have hybrid classes that integrate online and physical classes hence giving due consideration to those technical programs that require more physical interaction between instructors and students than others.

## 5.4 Suggested Areas for Future Studies

The study recommends that future studies research on the relationship between online learning and perception of quality of graduates from the various online learning programs. Besides, expanding the study population to include the supply side of education, that is, instructors to also examine their perception of the efficacy of online learning.

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## APPENDICES
## APPENDIX I: Introduction Letter

Dear Respondent,

I am a Masters student at the University of Nairobi, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences,
Department of Journalism and Mass Communication. I am carrying out a research on

'Students' perception of online learning on the brand image of institutions of higher learning in Kenya, case of University of Nairobi Main Campus'.

I humbly request your assistance in answering the attached questionnaire. Kindly respond to all the questions honestly. Tick in the brackets provided. The information you provide will be solely used for the purpose of this study.

Your response is greatly welcome.


Yours faithfully,

Jackline Mwende

Read the questions and answer appropriately in the spaces provided. Kindly tick inside the brackets. This questionnaire is meant to collect data on students' perception of online learning on the brand image of institutions of higher learning in Kenya, case of University of Nairobi, Main Campus.  The data to be collected is intended for academic work only and not for any other purpose.

## SECTION A: Background Information

1.  Gender:  (a)Male [  ]      (b) Female [  ]

2.  Age:  (a) 18-25years [  ]      (b) 26-35years [  ]    (c) 36-45years [  ]    (d) 46-55years  [  ]
    (e)56years & above [  ]

3.  Year of study:  (a)1st year [  ]   (b)2nd year [  ]   (c)3rd year [  ]    (d)4th year [  ] (e)5th year [
    ]   (f) 6th year [  ]

4.  (a) Faculty: Arts and Social Sciences [  ] (b) Built Environment and Design [  ] (c) Business
    and Management Sciences [  ]  (d) Engineering [  ]

## SECTION B: Students' perceptions of online learning on brand image

5.  To what extent do you agree with the statement that students' perception of online
    learning has effect on the brand image of University of Nairobi
    (a)  Strongly Agree [ ]        (b) Agree [ ]        (c) Undecided [ ]   (d) Disagree [ ]
        (e) Strongly Disagree [ ]

6.  Do you agree with the statement that convenience and flexibility that comes with online
    learning could have effect on the brand image of University of Nairobi?
    (a)Yes [  ]          (b) No [  ]            (c) Undecided [  ]

7.  To what extent do you agree that students' satisfaction towards online learning affects
    their perception of brand image of University of Nairobi?
    (a)Strongly Agree [ ]        (b) Agree [ ]        (c) Undecided [ ]   (d) Disagree [ ]      (e)
Strongly Disagree [ ]

8.  Online learning can encourage non-discrimatory teaching and learning practices since the
    teachers and students don't meet physically. Could this have any influence on the brand
    image?
        . (a) True [  ]        (b) Untrue [  ]        (c) Don't know

**SECTION C: Impact of online learning on brand image**

9. Do you think brand image could be impacted by lack of physical interactions between students and lecturers, students and students, students and faculty?

    (a) Strongly Agree [ ] (b) Agree [ ] (c) Undecided [ ] (d) Disagree [ ] (e) Strongly Disagree [ ]

10. Do you agree to the statement that brand image can be impacted by the lack of immediacy of responses in online learning context?

    (a) Yes [ ]      (b) No [ ]      (c) Don't know [ ]

11. Online learning promotes audience critical thinking, deep learning and reflection. Could this have impact on how students perceive brand image?

    (a)Strongly Agree [ ]                     (b) Agree [ ]         (c) Undecided [ ]

     (d) Disagree [ ]              (e) Strongly Disagree [ ]

12. Technology skills are said to have increased among audience of online learning. Do you agree that this has an impact on the brand image?

    (a) Yes [ ]      (b) No [ ]      (c) Don't know [ ]

**SECTION D: Credibility of online learning on brand image**

13. How much do you agree to the statement that effectiveness of online learning platforms has influence on audience perception that could affect brand image?

    (a) Strongly Agree [ ]   (b) Agree [ ]   (c) Undecided [ ]   (d) Disagree [ ]
    (e)Strongly Disagree [ ]

14. Do you agree that diverse online learning platforms that gave students choices of learning experiences to choose from could have impact on the credibility of online learning that could affect the brand image?

     (a)Yes [ ]         (b) No [ ]    (c) Not sure [ ]

15. Indicate the extent to which you are sure that timeliness of online learning feedback will affect the brand image of University of Nairobi, Main Campus?

    (a) Very sure [ ]      (b) Sure [ ]     (c) Not sure [ ]

16. Credibility of online learning could be affected by the availability or lack of technical support given to students. Do you think this could have an effect on the brand image of University of Nairobi?

(a) Strongly Agree [ ] (b) Agree [ ] (c) Undecided [ ] (d) Disagree [ ] (e) Strongly Disagree [ ]

**SECTION E:  How online learning would affect future brand image**

17. Do you think online learning could lead to change of the number of programs offered by the university in future which could affect the brand image?

a) Strongly Agree [ ]   (b) Agree [ ]    (c) Undecided [ ]   (d) Disagree [ ]   (e) Strongly Disagree [ ]

18. Could students' enrolment in the future be affected by online learning hence affect brand image? Do you agree with this statement?

(a) Strongly Agree [ ]   (b) Agree [ ]   (c) Undecided [ ]    (d) Disagree [ ]    (e) Strongly Disagree [ ]

19. Could online learning have future financial implications that could influence the brand image of University of Nairobi, Main Campus?

(a) Strongly Agree [ ] (b) Agree [ ] (c) Undecided [ ] (d) Disagree [ ] (e) Strongly Disagree [ ]

20. Do you think University of Nairobi, Main Campus could become fully fledged online learning institution in the future hence influencing its brand image?

(a)Strongly Agree [ ] (b) Agree [ ] (c) Undecided [ ] (d) Disagree [ ] (e) Strongly Disagree