e-ISSN: 2279-0837, p-ISSN: 2279-0845.

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Consumers' Gratifications of Commercial Websites Advertising In Kenya

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Abstract: Commercial websites are a form of internet advertising which is formed by companies as an advertising tool hosting many forms of online advertisement to promote products and services. Researchers and practitioners have equally agreed on the abilities of a commercial website as an advertising instrument that offers unlimited potential and benefits. This study sought to investigate consumers' uses and gratifications obtained from commercial websites advertising in Kenya. The study employed descriptive research design. Purposive sampling procedure was used to sample Nairobi. Random sampling was used to sample Kenyan 384 commercial websites users with a from a target population of one million users. A pilot study was carried in Thika town to establish reliability and validity of the research instruments. The researcher used Cronbach Alpha co-efficient to test the reliability of the instruments. A reliability co-efficient of 0.985 was obtained from the questionnaires. Descriptive statistics was used to evaluate collected data using categories based on research objectives using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 17.0. This study found that the strongest gratification obtained from using commercial websites was to share media content, such as pictures, videos, music and blogs. This is classified under socialization. The other gratifications obtained were categorized as information, convenience, entertainment, and relaxation and passing time. The study recommends that commercial websites should include social share and follow buttons to encourage social interactions from of online buyers to ensure business sites take full advantage of the ever increasing social media traffic in Kenya and that these websites should work on mobile phone optimization because of increased Smartphone usage. This study is also of the recommendation that websites should be kept consistent in order to improve readability and that company webmasters must ensure websites are safe from vulnerabilities.

Key Words: Advertising, Gratification, Website.

Date of Submission: 18-11-2018

Date of acceptance: 03-12-2018

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I. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Internet connectivity and its fast growing usage has formed commercial websites; a new platform for international business providing new opportunities for advertising and selling products and services online with the channel becoming, more accessible, more user- friendly, and less expensive (Schepers & Wetzels, 2007).

The web is innovative; thus presenting a new paradigm shift in the way business is conducted online and is routinely incorporated into contemporary marketing practice (Lebo, 2003). Web was expected to have a vast potential in both communication and e-marketing. Modern society has become information- oriented and is changing from traditional mass coverage media towards interactivity, a collection of computer mediated technologies and profitmaking interfaces which are internet represented (Stafford & Stafford, 1998).

The need to advertise online to buyers and to sustain e-markets calls for an understanding why clients elect to use websites has great significance in the e-commerce business model (Eighmey& McCord, 1998). Therefore online business models need to embrace understanding of consumers' gratifications of commercial websites (Bellman, & Johnson, 2000). Specific familiarity of consumers' needs in accessing commercial websites will offer online commerce with the capacity to best and cost-effectively serve their clients in addition to progressing theoretical expansion (Stafford & Stafford, 2001).

Berthon (1996) found that establishing existence of businesses and services on website is relatively cheaper with the advantage of targeting a more sophisticated and segmented audience. These characteristics turn websites into 'virtual marketplaces' where interactive tools facilitate firms with online existence to form and also reinforce relations with potential clients (Kotler & Keller, 2013). Web pages have turned into an innovative medium that use posters, banners and other types of online advertisements competing for clients' responsiveness

DOI: 10.9790/0837-2311061428 www.iosrjournals.org 14 | Page

and gratifications. Commercial websites supplement traditional communication media channels namely print, radio, television, indoor and outdoor advertising that advertisers have been using for the past century (Lebo, 2003).

Sellers are gradually adopting websites to promote goods and services; internet sellers function exclusively online, though others own online shops as an additional physical shops (Kotler & Keller, 2013). According to Nielsen's Report (2009), over 95 % of online consumers in in USA and Europe have previously experienced web advertising. Business websites are significant piece of a company's communication plan. Allen, Kania, and Yaeckel (2001) found that websites that don't retail products or services to their clients directly are also instrumental tools in information dissemination, therefore increasing awareness of a business, a service or a brand.

Dholakia and Rego (1998) found that websites are established as business outfits and despite comprising many formats of online advertisements of products, they are also considered as advertisements about the company and more importantly, these webpages act as evolutionary and navigation paths to homepages for the company.

Benefits of having commercial websites consist of a superior corporate image, improved consumer services, market enlargements/growth, discounts, in addition getting different opportunities. It enables companies to accomplish virtual transactions and improved customer service. Organizations that lack business websites generates a perception that they are not strategically positioned to compete for clients with similar industries (Sterne, 1996).

As customers are now showered with more options of online shopping locations, an understanding of their online behaviour will become vital to businesspersons, developers of online advertising sites and markets. Hence, this becoming a requirement and upward task of enticing buyers to support and consume online market offerings. (Lebo, 2003).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Although Websites have been identified as key marketing tools and channels that offer great potential and benefits in advertising of products and services, studies on gratifications of commercial websites advertising in Kenya remains scanty because previous studies focused on traditional media and general internet usage. This research address this gap by analyzing gratifications obtained from commercial websites in Kenya.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Scholars have observed the need to investigate the consumers' understandings and perceptions toward commercial websites particularly the notion involving gratifications of these sites as an advertising medium (Dholakia&Rego). Eighmey (1997) having used a collection of consumers' satisfaction statements as an evaluation to appraise commercial sites found users' perceptions of commercial websites as guided by three elements namely; information positioned in an entertaining context; logical organizational of ideas relating to objectives of the site; and accomplished strategies.

Grounded on the conclusions of conventional media, Eighmey and McCord (1998) examined consumers' usage of business sites. They were concerned with the usage and gratifications perspective and examined the clients experience related to these sites. Their study indicated that information involvement, personal status and entertainment value are three key gratifications obtained from visiting commercial websites. Although current literature suggested that clienteles would possibly have social usage of commercial websites, social opportunities of websites usage and gratifications had not so far been described and evaluated. From the experimental data generated by this study, social media gratification is attained when social networking sites makes it possible to share and link with family, friends, co-workers, associates and also strangers, building up a linkage of networks in order to keep in touch, share daily experiences, interests and preferences, opinions, photos and videos.

Online transactions can occur over a range of platforms away from the Internet, for example on private networks such as electronic funds transmissions and direct response television and telephone; but apart from these setups, without commercial websites usage and gratifications no ecommerce can take place since a website is the medium over which much of business to customer selling takes place (Eighmey, 1997; Novak, Hoffman, & Yung, 2000; Eighmey& McCord, 1998). Dholakia and Rego's (1998) study tried to categorize the types of marketing information contained on moneymaking sites.

Jones (2007) research examined businesses' webpages of 1996 and 1997 and compared them with those of 2006. The survey established that web design of business homepages was similar in 2006 unlike 1996 and 1997, and noted an improvement in normalization of the 2006 business sites homepages length, presence, location and speed of the search engine. This study also explored more on advertising content placements on a webpage, and found that viewability on home page and inside pages of commercial websites about products and

services are affected by ad clutter as it reduces noticeability and advertisement's impact because each advertisement competes for consumer's attention and a source of dissatisfaction.

Thus, this research investigates gratifications obtained from business sites as the most essential platform of virtual advertising, usage of this innovative avenue in a marketing framework, the motives that push consumers to go online and how these clients relate with advertising messages and amongst themselves on business websites.

2.2 Gratifications of Commercial Websites Advertising

There are numerous bases of users' satisfactions as there are various gratifications required and consequent from communication media use. According to research by Katz, Blumler and Gurevitch (1974) shows that users gratifications can result from three sources; disclosure to media per-se, media contents, social contexts that demonstrates conditions of disclosure towards diverse media. This establishes that users spend more time in using the media several ways, either through "passing" time or as a social instrument, all medium are unique and have their own purpose. This study applies the media usage and gratifications view to create an enhanced understanding of the different factors that motivate profitmaking web site use, and ascertains two new media uses and gratifications distinct to online advertisement which can be termed as socialization/interaction (using the platform for communication purpose) and convenience (simplifieswork or adds to one'sease or comfort).

Eighmey and McCord (1998) were among the first researchers in applying the usage and gratifications model to the World Wide Web. They set up gratifications with the viewing of profitmaking Web sites to be comparable to gratifications created to be related with other forms of media e.g. information motivation and entertainment, also opened new scopes termed as individual involvement and ongoing relationship. Individual involvement is interrelated to the level to which consumers embraced the websites to be individual. Continuing relationship represents the consumers' willingness to visit the Web site for a second time.

This research takes into account that consumers have alternate choices to fulfill their needs as media competes with several sources of fulfillments. Nonetheless gratifications can easily be acquired from a medium's contents for instance accessing a specific website, from awareness of a genre in the medium, for example gaining access to an online advertising site, from overall experience of the platform.

The gratification module of the U&G model is the outcome of media use termed as "gratification of wants and authorization of expectations" (Rubin 1997). Present research has specified that influential motives for use media and contribution are linked to gratification with use of media (Godlewski&Perse 2010). Outcomes from prevailing U&G researches suggests that individuals use media both for contents carried by a medium e.g. entertainment or information, or aimed at the simple involvement of the media usage procedure such as browsing, playing with the technology; these two comprehensive scopes are categorized as content and process gratifications (Cutler &Danowski, 1980). Content gratification refers to the messages carried by the channel, and a process gratification concerns the actual use of the channel itself (Cutler &Danowski, 1980). In the past years of U&G researches, well-known communications theoretician William McGuire (1974) stated that it was less imperative to identify how a consumer came to a medium than to know how the channel might hold a consumer as soon as a sample of its contributions has attracted a consumer.

Internet scholars are also concerned on how the channels increases and retains consumers (Barker 1997), with a sense towards improving e-commerce outcomes (Hanson, 2000). Originally U&G Internet studies reveals that consumers' sites picks are usually more driven by contents deliberations than by recreational browsing (Dr`eze& Zufryden,1997), consequently there are some initial recommendation that site contents might be further satisfying to the internet consumers than the process gratifications of internet surfing.

To grow the difference between content-centered motives and process-centered internet surfing effects in creating inspired internet usage, the dissimilarities amongst process and content gratifications precise to the Internet needs to be described in contexts with effective descriptions and subsequent measures that are definite to the channel. This is until now to be done concerning the U&G Internet research, as utmost of the initial Internet U&G researches were grounded on outcomes established in television exploration and U&G extents based on television researches have consequently not been extrapolative of Internet usage (Lin, 1999).

Cho and Shah (2003) examined the affiliation between Internet uses and gratifications in the framework of digital divide. The research found that Internet uses and gratifications differ across categories well-defined by the demographics variations of age and economic position. The results further revealed that users who are young and low in socio-economic status were more likely to utilize Internet to attain connection gratifications and regardless of age, both low and socio-economic group of consumers were possible to use the Internet to satisfy their learning needs.

Angleman (2000) expounded on the relationship between attitudes and opinions of Internet users and their pattern of utilization of the new media. This research found that there is a significant difference between the way students view and perceive the Internet and their use of the medium. Examine the viewing motives,

activities, and satisfactions of adolescents in the developing multichannel environment. The research depicted that powerfully inspired audiences were more dynamically involved in several consumer activities throughout the viewing period and such users experience greater gratification subsequently.

Rafeali (1986), during the evaluation of why and how learners use a college computer bulletin board, was able to depict that the consumers rarely skip the informative or factual messages, which point outs their strong attention on this types of messages. Maddox (1998) similarly projected that the most significant reason as to why individuals make use of the internet is to gather different information. This research depicted that online services are predominantly viewed as info-loaded media, and users try to establish more outlets for sharing and receiving information.

Korgaonkar and Wolin (1999), who carried out researches on consumers of e-commerce websites, recognized seven online gratification influences. Among these new factors such as 'privacy', 'transactional security and economic motivation'' (Korgaonkar&Wolin 1999). Young and Foot (2005) examined motivations and satisfactions gained from the use of social media channels such as Facebook. They established that a larger portion of learners maintain and nurture interactions with their friends. The motives of entertainment and time passing was linked to use of newspapers and television in previous studies also established as significant predictors to use of Facebook medium. This study concurs with the findings above that individuals make use of the internet in order to obtain gratifications through convectional media such as entertainment, information and diversion. However with the development of social networking sites, the research has also found motives around companionship and psychological needs.

Wu (2008) with the use of content analysis to examined and compared results of the use of three categories of hotels websites (private owned, state-owned and foreign-funded) to evaluate the features of the design which include (navigation, functionality and interactivity) also internet marketing activities on the sites. According to Wu (2008) only half of general websites and fewer sites provided the FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) folios. The results of the findings depicted that majority of the websites provided the business contact information, which included email addresses phone/landline numbers and location addresses.

With the use of three-step-method in-depth interviewing of online consumers, Maignan and Lukas's (1997) study examined users' insights and usage of websites and found four major shared usage of the internet Websites namely; an information source; a tool for communication; an object or place of consumption; a social system. Whereas the two studies above were concerned with content analysis and consumers' perceptions of websites uses this research dealt with analyses of usage and the gratifications of profitmaking websites in advertising and their relationship.

In an Indian Framework research conducted on Website usage and gratifications by, Roy (2008) recognized six gratification motivations. 'Career opportunities' and 'Wide exposure' were classified as content gratification causes. 'User-friendliness' and 'self-development' (easy to use) were regarded as process gratifications. The factors such as global exchange' and 'relaxation' was regarded as social gratification. Song (2004) pin points that content satisfaction is similar to the instrumental use whereas process gratification transmits to usage. This study posits the existence of instrumental media use motivations in order to differentiate between users whose mass media use behaviour is no habitual and has less defined satisfaction objectives and that their media use is extensively deliberate and much involved with the media content. This conceptualization presented a good approach to capture audience activities.

Even though various researches have examined the correlation between playfulness and continuous use of Internet (Stafford & Stafford, 1998; Stafford & Stafford, 2001), the researches often oversee the negative aspects such as process irritation. Criticisms of online marketing and advertising schemes mostly focus on frustrations or irritation brought about by connectivity (Peterson, 1997). The findings of this study identified the challenges faced by commercial websites users in Kenya as slow loading, clutter, high costs, fraud, identity theft and complexity of use which can probably lead to both irritation and annoyancy.

New media will oftenly generate new satisfactions and motives between several user groups (Angleman, 2000). According to Lin, (1999) the new scope of the users' inspirations and satisfactions needs to be recognized and satisfied. Even though the motives for using the Internet can differ among people, media channels and situations, most usages and satisfactions researches evaluate them basing on the subsequent scopes namely habits, passing time, entertainment, information/surveillance, relaxation, companionship, escape and arousal. The findings of this research indicate that Kenyans seek following categories of gratifications on commercial websites namely: process, content and social gratifications.

According to Lin, 1996, the use of Internet is also associated with a sequence of entertainment-oriented and also instrumental gratifications. Rafeali (1986) depicted that the principal motive of the users of the bulletin board are mainly entertainment, recreation, and distraction, this is trailed by understanding what other people think in regards to controversial issues through connecting with users who are of importance in a community. According to McQuail, (1994) the entertainment contents seems to content the users' necessities for pleasure, aesthetic enjoyment escapism, hedonistic, or emotional release Data analysis of this study found that

YouTube and other Social Networking Sites are forms of entertainment because of their content (pictures, videos, music, and blogs), fulfilling entertainment needs such as fun-seeking, leisure, amusement and enjoyment.

Johnson and Kaye (1998) in evaluation the Internet as a major source of political facts, realized that web users primarily use the internet for voter guidance, surveillance, social utility, entertainment, and excitement. Ferguson and Perse (2000), conducted a similar research focused on the web as a substitute to television watching, found out the four key motives for web use: relaxation/escape, passing time, social information and entertainment. Internet use integrates the components of mass and interpersonal communications. From the findings of this research identifies three distinct characteristics based on of websites usage and satisfactions model as convenience, socialization and surveillance.

Continuous relationships and Personal involvement also were acknowledged as new motive characteristics by Eighmey and McCord (1998) after the examination of user's reactions to websites. Pavlik (1996) distinguished that majority of online, individuals are enabled communicate, act, or contribute to the extensive societal and political processes. This category of use can lead to an increase in self-efficacy, self-esteem, and political awareness. Intensified relations also were proposed as drives for Internet use (Lillie, 1997). In a research conducted by Kuehn (1994), he attentively explained the interactive ability of the internet through sending of emails, group discussions, direct ordering of goods and services, and availability of links to aid in gathering more information (Schumann & Thorson, 1999; Ko, 2002). Similarly, this study suggests commercial websites should be created to fully satisfy the consumers' necessity to gather valuable information and also provide social interaction opportunities for them.

According to Tossberg, (2000), another important aspect of the internet use is the group support. The Internet provides a moderately secure location for information exchange, provision of support, and also act as a gathering place short of uncertainties of discrimination. With inclusion in the group, users can easily voice thoughts, judgments and apprehensions in a helpful online atmosphere (Korenman& Wyatt, 1996). Privacy in the internet motivates users to communicate easily and with no restrictions than they could in real life situations (Ryan, 1995). According to Braina, (2001) with the fear of social accusation and punishment, marginal groups can as well take part in the communication practice as long as the technology is universally accessible. The findings of this study show that commercial websites take an active role in developing healthy friendships and networks and gratify consumers need to socialize freely without fear of patronage.

McQuail (1994) specified that individuals made use of different media platforms to examine whatever was happening outside and within and their surroundings. According to Whiting and Williams, (2013) study, 32% of the participant used social media to monitor or spy what other individuals are undertaking. Correspondingly, the traditional media has no capability cover all reports happening everywhere due to censorship, vastness of space, and fear, persons with mobile phones or cameras can easily record and upload, images, audios and videos on different social media channels. This champions the model of guerrilla journalism or citizens (Roy, 2008). This study considers blogs and social networking sites not only for socialization but can also be used as an online "journals" were people post opinions, celebrity gossip, upload photos and video, report breaking news, question policies and legislation with no regard for ethics.

Ruggiero (2000) explains that, as establishment of new technologies represent individuals with a growing number of media platforms, motivation and gratification should develop to fundamental modules of audience analysis. According to Roy (2008) maintaining that so as to fully focus on the social-cultural effects of adoption of the new communications technologies can be premature till we have fully understood the exact reason as to how and why persons are using of the media channels. This study therefore focuses on uses and gratifications perspective of commercial websites advertising (what individuals do with mass communication media) in contrast to social-cultural effects of new communications technology.

Scholars have distinguished that the Internet may well serve both communicative and transactional purposes (Ruggiero, 2000)). Given their extensive understandings of e-mails and other network platforms, academic researchers instinctively comprehend the significance of the website as a tool for communication; to most researchers it's second nature to make use of the websites for personal communications and social interacting. Amongst the larger public, nevertheless, the probable social effectiveness of the Internet might not be as spontaneous. However, the probable uses and linked social gratifications rising from clienteles use of the Internet as a social setting (Korenman& Wyatt, 1996) are significant to explore. Scholars may also well presume to discover developing social gratifications for consumers Internet usage.

Assessments and dimension of motivational concepts will be determined by the variables one begins with, and aforementioned Internets U&G trainings have basically embraced measures unswervingly from preceding television-based researches (Eighmey, 1997; Newhagen&Rafaeli, 1996;). "Old" media U&G researches of TV and radio on no occasion acknowledged anything above the content or process contrast of media use scopes. Latent social usage scopes of the Internet are probably to be overlooked in researches that reformed before established usage dimensions.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

This research adopted a descriptive study design in identifying and analyzing gratifications of commercialwebsites advertising in Kenya. This method helped the researcher in gathering of raw data, describing, organizing, and presenting the collected facts. The researcher mainly uses illustrations such as charts, tables and graphs to help readers in understanding the data distribution hence providing a better interpretation of web advertising and a representation of the gratifications of web advertising in Kenya. The research design was thus appropriate as it allowed the researcher to analyze the gratifications of commercial websites advertising in Kenya.

3.2 Location

This study was conducted in Nairobi. The location was purposely selected because Nairobi is Kenya's principal multi-cultural town with four million people. According to Junior World mark Encyclopedia of World Cities (2000) Nairobi is a business and cultural center for East Africa. Nairobi was ideal location for this research because of its well-developed communication infrastructure; electricity supply and fibre optic cable internet connectivity. According to Kenya Communication Authority Report of 2017, the city also has the highest number of internet (4G) users with 85% of all Facebook users in Kenya residing in Nairobi.

Kenya's leading online stores such as Jumia, OLX and Kilmall are physically located in Nairobi. The city is the commercial Centre of the country offering business opportunities in agricultural products, furniture, cars, banking, transport, electronic goods (radio, TV and other appliances), computers, mobile phones, clothing, hospitality and tourism among others. According to 2017, Kenya communication Authority, the high adoption of smartphones in Kenya has improved internet penetration with the highest internet traffic coming from mobile phones with 68% of all phones sold by Jumia in 2017 taking place in Nairobi, thus becoming the most suitable location for this study.

3.3 Target Population

According to Communication Authority of Kenya (2017) Telecommunications Report, Nairobi Central Business District has one million internet users. This population comprised male and female Kenyan citizens, current web users and residents of Nairobi. The demographic characteristics of this population considered aspects such as gender, age and the level of education. General Websites usage patterns of the population in this study investigated were respondent's internet skills, frequency of browsing in a week and their exposure to websites advertising.

3.4 Sampling Procedure and Sample Size

The trained research assistants approached potential respondents in randomly selected 20 cyber cafes, 10 shops, 50 offices, and five (5) learning institutions in the Central business District of Nairobi City around the Moi Avenue, Uhuru Highway, Haille Selassie Avenue, and University way. Respondents were then vetted as to whether they had current access to the websites before being asked to participate in the study. The sample was limited to 384 respondents from a population of One Million websites users. The selection was random and purposive. It was purposive because the research team varied the sample in form of gender, age, and the level of education. After helping a participant in filling the questionnaire, research assistant then would find a another person and the scrutiny procedure would start again. According to Krejecie and Morgan (1970), method on determination of study sample size, a population of one million has a sample size of 384 respondents.

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IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Response Rate

Three hundred and eighty four (384) questionnaires were administered to consumers of commercial websites advertising messages in Nairobi City and all returned, with the response frequency of 100%. The researcher used hand delivery method to distribute the questionnaires to the respondents which can be credited for high return percentage. This is in line to Kombo and Tromp (2006) who argues that hand delivered questionnaires achieve a higher response rate than mailed questionnaires.

4.2 Demographics Characteristics of the Respondents

The responses were obtained from 384 respondents. The sample was spread out based on gender, age and the level of education. These demographic characteristics of the sample were significant for the understanding of commercial websites advertising, access and usage.

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4.3.1 Gender of Respondents

The sample consisted of 224 male respondents or 58 percent of the total sample and 160 female respondents or 42 percent as illustrated in figure 4 below.

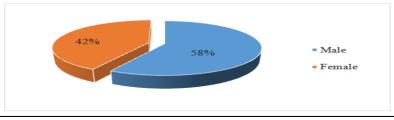


Figure 2: Percentage Distribution of Gender of the participants

The information on figure 4 shows the distribution of the subjects by gender in the usage of commercial websites advertising messages. Out of 384 respondents 224 (58%) were males and the remaining 160 (42%) were females. This information indicates that there is a significant gender inequality in commercial websites usage in Kenya with more men using commercial websites than women. This gender inequality is not reflected in commercial websites usage only but also in other demographics such as education, politics, business, property ownership and workforce because Kenya is a patriarchal society (Chege&Sifuna, 2006).

4.3.2 Age of Respondents

An item was included in the tool that sought the age in years of the subjects, information obtained is presented in the table as shown below.

Age in years	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Below 18	41	10
18-30	134	35
35-40	172	45
41-50	23	6
51 and above	14	4
Total	384	100

Table 4.3 Respondents' in Age Years

Source: Self, 2018

The information in the table above illustrates that most of the subjects aged between 35-40 years were 172 (45%) while only 14 (4%) were above 51 years. The respondents who were below 18 years had a frequency of 41 (10%) and while the age category 18-30 years had a frequency of 23 (35%). The respondents who were 41-50 years had a frequency of 23(6%).

The findings of this study indicated five different age categories of Kenyans users of commercial websites. Majority of Kenyans who visit commercial websites are young adults aged between 35-40 years, while the age group that least visits business websites comprise of senior citizens above 51 years. The second highest users of commercial websites consist of the youth at aged between 18-30 years. The teenagers below the age of 18 years are second least users of commercial sites. Kenya's population aged between 41-50 and 51 and above, have been late adopters of technology compared to the younger generation. This explains their low percentages as consumers of commercial websites advertising (Wanjoga, 2002).

4.3.3 Highest Educational Level of the Participants

Subject's level of education was between primary and university education. Eight (2%) respondents were of primary education while 88 (23%), were of secondary education. Majority of the respondents representing 161 (42%) and 119 (31%) were of university and diploma education respectively. Those respondents with other forms of education were 8 (2%) which included certificate courses and Kenya Accountants and Secretaries National Examinational Board training.

The figure below show percentage distribution of respondent' highest educational level.

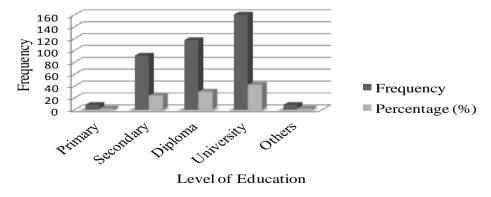


Figure 3: Percentage Distribution of Respondent' Highest Level of Education

The analysis above suggests that most of the participants were literate with 96% having education above primary level, thus they could be able to understand how commercial websites transact the business of advertising, their motives, uses and gratifications. The percentage of respondents with university and diploma education combined was 72 %. This high percentage from the two groups may be as a result of many factors such as need for information and better economic status associated with higher education. (Chege &Sifuna, 2006)

4.4 General Websites Usage

4.4.1 Respondents' Internet Skills

Subjects were requested to evaluate their internet skills. From the analysis of the data obtained majority of the respondents 182 (47%) had good skills, 90 (24%) medium, followed by excellent internet skills with 53 (14%), 39(10%) had acceptable skills, and 20 (5%) had weak skills. The table below presents their responses.

Skill	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Weak	20	5
Acceptable	39	10
Medium	90	24
Good	182	47
Excellent	53	14
Total	384	100.0

Table 4.4 Respondents' Internet Skills

The analysis of data above indicate that majority of Kenya's commercial websites users had strategic skills that enabled them to effectively visit business websites and could understand the content of advertising messages displayed in them. Van Dijk (2005) describes effective internet expertise as the ability to manipulate computer and system for specific objectives.

4.4.2 Frequency of Browsing in a Week

Respondents were requested to indicate the number of times they browsed commercial in a week. The Analysis of frequency on browsing in a week by the respondents is presented in Figure 4 below.

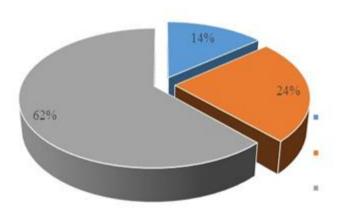


Figure 4: Frequency of Browsing in a Week

The analysis of data above reveals that out of 384 respondents, 54(14%) browse 1-5 times in a week, 92 (24%) respondents browse 5-10 times in a week while the majority 238 (62%) browses more than 10 times in a week.

These findings show that more Kenyans like to use internet on weekly basis which is a strong indicator that the majority access commercial websites more than ten times in a week. Those who had high education levels (Degree and Diploma) and young adults (18-30 and 31-40) had a higher weekly volume of use, compared to younger internet users and the aged.

4.4.3 Respondents Awareness of Websites Advertising

Majority of the participants 311(81%) were aware of web advertising as opposed to 73 (19%) who were not aware as presented in the figure below.

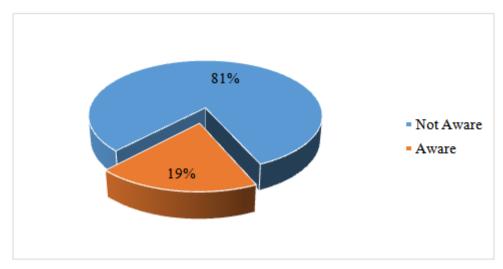


Figure 5: Respondents Aware of Websites Advertising

The analysis of data above demonstrate that majority 81% of Kenyans access and expose themselves to commercial websites and are aware of websites advertising of products and services while 19 % of Kenyans are not aware of web advertising.

4.4.4 Respondents Who Pay Attention to the Advertisements on Commercial Websites

The data of the respondents who were attentive to ads in commercial websites was 230 (60%) and the ones that do not pay attention were 154 (40%). This information is shown in the figure below.

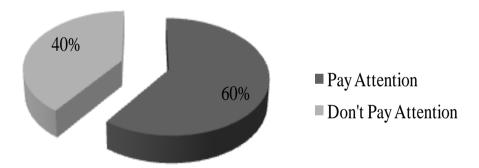


Figure 6: Respondents who pay are Attentive to the Ads on Commercial Websites.

This study regards to pay attention to ads as to listen to, watch, consider and to takenotice of advertisements on commercial websites very carefully. This means majority of Kenyans are engaging with content on commercial websites because they find it adds value to their lives. Good content is defined by the consumer. According to this study good content sought on commercial websites by users has six characteristics in common, it is informative, convenient to use, engaging, it is entertaining, helps them to relax and pass time. The relevancy creates an affinity. According to the findings of this study when websites create security concerns and raise privacy concerns users simply stop going to the site therefore giving the ads on webpages zero attention.

4.4.5 Names of Commercial Websites Most Visited by the Respondents

Respondents were asked to list names of commercial websites they most visited. The analysis of the data obtained provided ten (10) names of commercial websites most visited by the subjects as presented in the table below.

<u>Table 4.4.5</u>: Names of Commercial Websites Most Visited by the Respondents

S/N	Name of the website	Respondents	Percentage (%)		
1	YouTube	62	16		
2	Facebook	51	14		
3	Jumia	46	13		
4	OLX	41	12		

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DOI: 10.9790/0837-2311061428 www.iosrjournals.org

5	Twitter	38	10	
6	Sportpesa	37	9	
7	Instagram	33	8	
8	WhatsApp	29	7	
9	Google	26	6	
10	Kilimall	21	5	
Total		384	100	

YouTube.com was the most visited website by 62 (16%) of the respondents for music and videos. This study concurs with Haridakis and Hanson (2008), research which shows that YouTube was the most preferred site by 91% users for sharing ideas and emotions via videos for personal motives such as affection, inclusion, and control which can influence social means. The second most visited site was Facebook by 51(14%) of the respondents, Jumia.co.ke was third with 46 (13%) and Olxkenya.co.ke an online marketplace that provides a platform for peer-to-peer selling with 41 (12%) of the respondents was fourth. Twitter was fifth with 38 (10%), Sportpesa.com was sixth with 37 (9%) followed by Instagram with 33 (8%), WhatsApp on web messenger visited by 29 (7%), Google Kenya ninth with 26 (6%) and Kilimall another online marketplace at position 10 visited by 21 (5%) of the respondents.

These findings reveals that the Kenyans have embraced e-commerce hence are trading online more often with 60% paying attention to ads on commercial websites. (See pp.48). It also discloses that people are turning to websites as their preferred mode for a fast and convenient way to purchase products and services without having to visit an actual store. Many marketers are now taking this opportunity to reach Kenyans on social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter also WhatsApp via profile pages.

Ruggiero (2000), anticipated that the Internet usage will result to innovativeness, leading to changes in media consumers' social, roles, and personal habits. It is evident from the statistics above that his prediction was right because social interaction among family, professional contacts and friends has reformed from traditional media to an online entity because of the growing acceptance of social sites in Kenya e.g., Facebook, Instagram, Whatssap, Snapchat, and Twitter as shown in Table 4.4.2 above.

According to Internet Users Statistics for Africa (2018), Facebook is the biggest social media platform in Kenya with approximately 7 Million active users, and growing, each day. The findings of this study show that given its reach and uptake, apart from Facebook being a major communication tool, it is a big opportunity for marketing of brands through placement of advertisements. Companies can develop and showcase their products through Facebook Pages, build their communities and also run digital advertising campaigns.

These virtual sites cater for a certain population therefore establishing a community many internet users cannot find outside a website setting and can vary from professional networking sites, friend-networking sites, romantic dating sites, soccer clubs and even websites that encourage political parties, coalitions and presidential candidates.

The findings above are particularly important for advertisers hoping to use a website as a key marketing channel targeting potential clients in order to present a compelling website advertising proposition to reach Kenyans online.

4.4.6 Types of Websites that Respondent Avoid

The Respondents were requested to indicate some of the websites they avoid visiting. The analysis of the data obtained shown in the table below identified five (5) categories of commercial websites that are mostly avoided by the subjects.

Table4.4.6 Types of Websites that Respondents Avoid

	71		
S/N	Website3	Respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Sexual sites	202	52
2	Construction	182	47
3	Airline	172	45
4	Gambling websites	170	44
5	Dating sites	161	42

The findings in the table above indicate the most avoided websites are sexual sites by 202 (52%) of the respondents followed closely by construction sites by 182 (47%), then airline websites at number three by 172 (45%), fourth are gambling sites by 170 (44%) and at number five dating websites by 161 (42%) of the total respondents.

The analysis of data above show that sexual morality of Kenyans is closely guarded and that respondents were bothered by online pornography and pornography use. Sexuality and dating sites were both avoided because of reasons related to sexual immorality and addiction (see table 4.4.9). This means despite the huge numbers of materials posted on sexual, gambling and dating sites, a significant number of Kenyans avoid

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them. It is also evident from the statistics above that a good number of Kenyans are not concerned with construction and airline websites because of high costs involved with the two ventures.

4.4.7 Reasons from the Respondents that Explain why they avoid Certain Commercial Websites

Respondents (384) were asked to list reasons that would explain why they avoided visiting certain commercial websites (in 4.4.9). The analysis of the information obtained shows five (5) reasons why respondents avoid visiting certain commercial websites as shown in the table below.

Table 4.4.7 Reasons from The Respondents that explain why they avoid Certain Commercial Websites

S/N	Reason	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	It's immoral	109	28
2	It's addictive	76	20
3	It's risky (loss of money)	68	19
4	Manipulative	66	17
5	Poor advertisements	65	16
Total		384	100

Immorality was the strongest reason why respondents avoided visiting certain commercial websites by 109 (28%) followed by addiction with 76 (20%), risk of losing money as number three with 68 (19%), fourth manipulation 66(17%) and last was poor advertisements by 65 (16%) of the total respondents.

This research reveals that Kenyan commercial websites users mind their morality online, fear pornographic and gambling addiction, and manipulation leading to loss of money. This study agrees with Brand's (2014) research from seven countries on cybersex which indicated that consumption of pornographic content from websites is often linked with sexual immorality. Some respondents of this study found gambling to be risky, unpredictable and was regarded manipulative. These respondents accused several betting sites guilty of disappearing with customer funds, not honouring winning wagers and not paying withdrawals, or paying very late.

4.4.8 Gratifications for Using Commercial Websites

So as to measure the gratifications achieved from commercial websites usage the 31 use statements in table 4.2were worded differently from the reasons. The claims were formulated to quantity the supposed advantage respondents gained from using business websites, for instance, 'to get what I want for less effort' item in the reasons scale turned into 'commercial websites ' help me to get what I want for less effort'. The participants were probed to specify the level to which the commercial websites which they used provided them with gratifications; just what they were searching for by means of the Likert scale ranging from (very satisfied) to (dissatisfied). Table 4.2 below shows the analysis of the data obtained on top ten (10) gratifications of using commercial sites in Kenya.

Table 4.2 Respondents' Gratifications for Using Commercial Websites

Gratifications	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	Percentage (%)	Position
Help share media eg, blogs pictures music, and videos	150	129	70	18	17	39.1	1
Can get what I want for less effort	140	123	76	92	36	36.5	2
Helps me to ask questions and get answers	136	148	65	19	16	35.4	3
Helps me learn about useful things	135	110	88	29	22	35.2	4
Helps me to get information for free	133	106	84	42	19	34.6	5
I can use it anytime	132	101	92	36	23	34.3	6
It's entertaining	131	129	80	34	11	34.1	7
It is a good way to research	130	120	74	40	20	33.9	8
Helps me to learn to use products and services	122	120	90	36	16	31.8	9
It's convenient to use	121	114	86	35	28	31.5	10

S/N Gratifications for commercial websites and usage categories 1 Socialization Helps me to share media content, such as blogs, pictures, music, and videos. 2 Convenience Can get what I want for less effort Helps to ask questions and get answers It's convenient 3 Information To keep up with what's going on To get free information Good way to conduct research Helps learn things unknown Helps learn to use products and services 4 Entertainment It's entertaining It's enjoyable Relaxation It is relaxing 6 Passing time Helps me to pass time It's a habit

Table 4.2.1 Summary of Respondents' Gratifications for Using Commercial Websites and Usage Categories

According to data analysis of this research (Tables 4.6 and 4.6.1) the strongest gratification obtained by respondents from commercial websites 150 (35.2%), was that commercial websites helped respondents to share media, such as pictures, videos, music and blogs. This can be classified under the category of socialization. In the second category of gratification, convenience, 140 (36.5%) of the respondents indicated get what they wanted for less effort, its convenience to use, also position 10 by 121 (31.5%) of the respondents while 136 (35.4%) are helped by commercial websites to ask questions and get answers. The numbers 3, 4, 5, 8 and 9 are all information seeking gratifications as shown in Tables 4.6.1. Entertainment gratification is at position seven with 131(34.1%) of the respondents having sought it.

These finding of this study differ with the Dobos and Dominick's, (1988) research on gratification factors across all media which revealed that informational motive was a significant factor in uses and gratifications. Richard Vincent in his 1997 study also found that college students utilized print media to satisfy needs to know current events. In addition to informational gratifications, participants responded that the Internet was a research source for business, academics and product or service information. According to study conducted by Stafford & Stafford in 1998 on usage and gratifications exploratory of the internet, they found out that their respondents sought news and research information from the websites.

The analysis of commercial websites gratifications statements in this study yielded six interpretable categories of gratification namely, socialization, information, convenience, and entertainment, relaxation and passing time (see Table 4.2.1). Under the category of socialization, respondents indicated that YouTube, Facebook, WhatsApp and Twitter offered an opportunity for sharing opinions and emotions via videos, emails, pictures, tweets and music, suggesting socialization motives such as inclusion, affection and bonding which motivate social interactions.

A significant number of the respondents found gratification in seeking of information allotted on commercial websites about products, services, jobs, educational and research materials. Analysis of data in this category shows that respondents sought information available on company websites, online markets (Jumia, OLX and Kilmall), and search engines (Google) and other social networking sites such as YouTube and Facebook. Respondents reported convenience category as a gratification when they could get what they wanted on commercial websites for less effort and could use sites anytime. This was possible because majority of the sample reported to access commercial from the comfort of their homes any time.

The findings of this study considers YouTube and other Social Networking Sites as a form of entertainment because of their content (pictures, videos, music, and blogs), fulfilling entertainment needs such as fun-seeking, leisure, amusement and enjoyment. Respondents indicated that YouTube added another perspective to spectatorship by permitting interactive socializing among users, therefore gaining socialization and interaction through entertainment, a concept peculiar to You Tube, Facebook, WhatsApp and Twitter.

This study also identified two other gratification categories for visiting websites namely relaxation and passing time. Respondents' gratification for visiting websites for relaxation was for emotional relief, enriching their mood and to diverting their attention away from stress and hassles in their life with gratification statements such as, it's relaxing' (for relaxation), and 'helps me to pass time', and 'it's a habit' (for passing time) (see table 4.2.1.).

V. CONCLUSIONS

This study found the concept of commercial websites advertising gratification is closely associated to interactivity, which is defined as responsiveness of the medium (Rafaeli, 1988). This research found that interactivity of the Web enhance socialization in social websites for instance, Facebook, Instagram or Twitter and interactions between clients and advertisers.

This investigation also identified and analyzed six categories of gratifications obtained from using commercial websites namely; socialization, information seeking, convenience, entertainment, relaxation and passing time. This research contributes to growing of commercial websites advertising literature in various ways. The study provides useful strategies and recommendations for companies hoping to promote their products and services on line and also for reputable businesses already undertaking e-commerce.

5.1 Recommendations

This study recommends that commercial websites should include social share and follow buttons to encourage social interactions from of online buyers to ensure business sites take full advantage of the ever increasing social media traffic in Kenya and that commercial websites should work on mobile phone optimization because of increased Smartphone usage in Kenya.

5.2 Suggestions for Further Research

Due to continuous changes in communication technologies, new grounds are emerging for scholars to focus especially on processes, policy and regulations. It is necessary to examine individual gratifications of respective commercial sites and attitudes toward understanding cross-cultural variations in online customer's behaviour.

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Henry Nkoru Nabea." Consumers' Gratifications of Commercial Websites Advertising In Kenya." IOSR Journal Of Humanities And Social Science (IOSR-JHSS). vol. 23 no. 11, 2018, pp. 14-28.