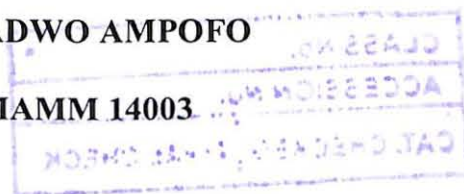


**GHANA INSTITUTE OF JOURNALISM**

**THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ADVERTISING ON ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES:  
A STUDY OF GUINNESS GHANA BREWERY LIMITED**

**KWADWO AMPOFO**

**MAMM 14003**



**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND  
RESEARCH (SoGSaR), GHANA INSTITUTE OF JOURNALISM IN PARTIAL  
FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF MASTER OF  
ARTS DEGREE IN MEDIA MANAGEMENT**

**OCTOBER, 2015**

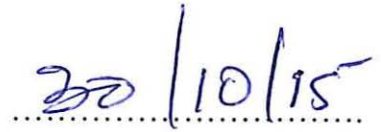
### STUDENT'S DECLARATION

I declare that except for the references and interviews, which have been duly acknowledged by me, this desertification is the result of my own research carried out under the supervision of Mr. Yaw Odame Gyau and has never been presented neither in whole nor in part for the award of a degree.



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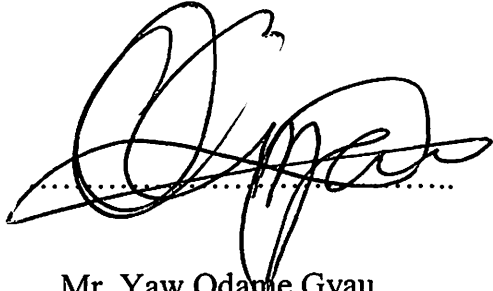
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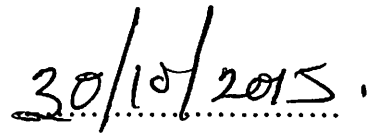
## SUPERVISOR'S CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that the preparation and presentation of this dissertation were supervised by me in accordance with the guidelines of supervision of dissertation laid down by Ghana Institute of Journalism.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Yaw Odame Gyau', written over a horizontal dotted line.

Mr. Yaw Odame Gyau

(Supervisor)

A handwritten date '30/10/2015' written in black ink over a horizontal dotted line.

Date

## **DEDICATION**

This dissertation is dedicated to the memory of my late Father, Mr. C.D. Ampofo and my Mother Mrs. Mildred Ampofo.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Thanks to the Almighty God for his guidance and protection throughout my one-year programme and helping me complete this project work.

A special thanks goes to my supervisor, Mr. Yaw Gyau for his sense of direction, guidance, advice and reading all my manuscript for this study. I am also grateful to Irene Marfoa my wife and my children Nana Kwasi, Afia and Sibusiso for their immense support; Mr. Anass Abdulai, my Research Assistant; and Dr. Clement Abas Apaak for inspiring me to advance academically. My appreciation further goes to Joy FM and Multimedia Group for understanding the demanding nature of the course. Finally, I crown my appreciation to all my loved ones, too many to mention. God Bless you all!

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## **ABSTRACT**

Even though social media is known to affect and influence consumers' decision with respect to the purchase of certain products, there is a paucity of empirical findings on how social media influences consumers' decision with respect to buying alcoholic beverages. The general objective of this study was to assess the impact of social media advertising on consumer goods; a study of Guinness Ghana Breweries Limited (GGBL). This study adopted the descriptive survey approach and collected data from 200 customers of Alcoholic beverages based in the Greater Accra region. This study found over 50% of the respondents find adverts through social media as more interesting, more interactive, more marketable and more innovative. Effects of social media on customers are mixed. Enriching content on their social media platforms is key to influencing consumer decision-making. In fact about 53.5% of the respondents either strongly agreed or agreed that that the emotional cues in the contents of the ads on the company's social media platform affect their decisions. Content shared by customers must therefore be censored and controlled to avoid mischief and blackmailing of GGBL.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 Background of the Study**

Communication with existing and potential customers is vital to every business entity that intends to chalk success in its marketing campaign (Amoateng and Poku, 2013). Advertising is a form of communication that typically attempts to persuade potential customers to purchase or to consume more of a particular brand of product or service. Advertisements are basically designed to generate increased consumption of products and services through the creation and reinforcement of brand image and brand loyalty (Silveira, 2003). Critics of alcoholic beverage advertising have maintained that the huge expenditure and attractive promotional messages result in increased levels of alcohol consumption (Smith and Foxcroft, 2009). Adverts are almost always embedded with persuasive messages with factual information. It is often the only means of communicating the existence of a product to potential buyers on a large scale. It also increases the recognition of a company's name, reputation and enhances the opportunity of salesperson's to create a sale, among others (Silveira, 2003). Major mediums used to deliver these messages include television, radio, cinema, magazines, newspapers, and video games, sides of buses, the internet and billboards. Advertising is often placed by an advertising agency on behalf of a company or other organization (Smith and Foxcroft, 2009).

Over the last decade, social networks have changed communications, shifting the way we consume, produce and interact with information, based on explosive migration to the web. Social media websites like Facebook (FB), Twitter etc. have created huge impetus on the communication platform with the end customers of different products and services that was lacking in the traditional medium (Solomon et al. 2010). Generally, social networks such as groups or individuals who own the power over consumers can affect consumers' purchase decision (Solomon et al. 2010). The online social networks provided facilities for consumers to interact with one another, accessing to information, comments, reviews, and rates that can help them for purchasing decisions in different ways (Patarawadee, 2013). Social interaction with others creates new behaviors and also affects on consumers' daily purchase decisions (Schiffman et al. 2008). Diverse ranges of people have influence on consumers such as family members, friends, co-workers, and group or individual that consumers would love to compare themselves with them (Schiffman et al. 2008). These ranges of people could be involved in consumer's online social networks, and influence from these individuals can be online as well. Consumers make many product decisions every day and they would like to receive advice from others (Evans, et al, 2009). Online social networks are good platform for consumers to gather information and pieces of advice.

Social media advertising is a paid form of brand, service or business promotion and requires a proper and planned communicative message and budget (Patarawadee, 2013). Customers play an important role in any major or minor communication because they are the one who are going to decide the fate of the advertising communication. According to Jothi et al. (2011), some benefits of social network advertising include popularizing a firm's brand, idea or service to the target group; informing target audience about the firm's brand or service's presence in the market; encouraging healthy competition in the market; providing social benefits for the brand and making the audience to interact and keep them intact with the brand.

The relationship between social media and consumer decision-making present that social media affects advertising attitudes, brand attitudes, and purchasing intentions of consumer (Patarawadee, 2013). It will not necessarily affect consumer's decision-making, but might possess a mediating effect (Taining, 2012). Social media can build brand attitudes that affect buying behavior. The good image of brand or product can lead the consumer to make decision on their purchases. When consumer's friend on social media shares or recommends services or products on their social media, it affects brand attitude and influences their decision-making. Yet, advertising on social media, which is provided by commercial sources affect both consumer brand attitudes and purchasing intention (Taining, 2012). From that information, it helps marketers plan their marketing strategies. Many marketers use social media for marketing campaigns. It is the

easy way to communicate with consumers; also it is inexpensive to advertise their brands or services.

The alcohol beverages sector in Ghana is booming as 30 million litres of alcohol are consumed yearly and a survey conducted by Ghana Organization on Foetal Alcohol Syndrome (GOFAS, an NGO, estimated that the per capita consumption of alcohol is 1.5 litres - about 7 million gallons of alcohol consumed annually (Kunateh, 2009). As public awareness regarding the impact of alcohol abuse on society is heightened, so is the pressure to regulate advertising on alcoholic beverages (Gbadamosi, 2010). Some areas in which the alcohol industry has faced criticism are in their alleged targeting of young people in advertisements and the time of airing these commercials (Gbadamosi, 2010). According to WHO (2011) report on alcohol marketing in Africa, adolescents and young adults have become the specific target audience for alcohol marketers because it is believed that drinking and brand preferences of adolescents are an important predictor of preferences later in life. To this effect, young people are stimulated to experiment with alcohol by exposure to attractive alcohol advertising and event and sports sponsoring (WHO, 2011).

## **1.2 Problem Statement**

It appears that using social media to influence consumer purchase decision is not that simple and straight forward. As found out by Yogesh and Yesha (2014), social media seems not to have different impact on different demographic segments of customers. Thus, demographic variable may not be appropriate in

segmenting social media customers especially in their purchase behavior. Again, the authors found that the tendencies to share positive or negative reviews and opinions seem to be moderate among consumers. This is worrying since firms need to restrict shared opinion; as dissatisfied customers may easily switch companies or products. Again, Ioană and Stoica (2014) found in their study that even though most consumers are not exactly secretive regarding information posted by other clients who had bought the same product, which they wish to purchase, yet customers are fairly indifferent. They only consider them to be relevant but they do not influence their purchasing habits and they read them in a hurry.

Furthermore, Chianasta and Wijaya (2014) found in their study that the impact of marketing promotion through Social Media is not positive for Lenovo this far. The survey shows that Lenovo has not done an effective marketing promotion through social media. In fact the authors concluded that Lenovo's promotion in social media have made some people recognize their brand and influence their buying decision, although some of the people show no interest in buying Lenovo's product even after they have seen Lenovo's promotion in social media. The authors additionally suggested that there are other promotional tools to help firms increase their brand awareness influence people's buying decision (promotional tools such as billboards, TV, Radio, Magazine advertisement).

These findings suggest that even though social media is increasingly becoming an effective tool of interacting with customers, it should not be fully utilized without addition of other traditional marketing communications tools such as billboards, TV, Radio, Magazine advertisement (Chianasta and Wijaya, 2014). In effect, these findings imply that social media's influence of consumer decision-making is not absolute and conclusive (Chianasta and Wijaya, 2014). However, the uncertainty surrounding the nature of Social Media influence on the level of patronage of alcoholic beverage necessitated this research. Again, there is a dearth of empirical work on the influence of social media on alcohol purchase decision in Ghana. Again, GGBL recently launched a media campaign dubbed "Made of Black". The firm used avenues such as social media to push this campaign. Considering the inconclusive findings of authors such as Yogesh and Yesha (2014); Ioană and Stoica (2014) and (Chianasta and Wijaya, 2014), the issues that arise are: Is social media effective? What makes it effective or ineffective? Do Social Media influence consumers' purchasing decisions of alcoholic beverages? Do emotional cues in the context of Social Media Ads influence consumer decision-making? It was therefore against this background that this study was conducted.

### **1.3 Research Objectives**

The objectives of this study were categorized in two – the general and the specific.

### **1.3.1 General Objectives**

The general objective of this study was to assess the impact of social media advertising on consumer goods of Guinness Ghana Breweries Limited (GGBL).

### **1.3.2 Specific Objectives**

Specifically, this study sought to:

1. Find out whether content in Social Media Ads influence Consumer Decision-Making
2. Find out the challenges of using social media as the source of alcohol purchasing decision.
3. To make suggestions that will facilitate restriction of shared opinion on Social Media that has the tendency to tarnish the reputation or otherwise of GGBL.

### **1.4 Research Questions**

The following research questions were asked in order to operationalize the above-mentioned objectives:

1. Does the content in Social Media Ads influence Consumer Decision-Making?
2. What are the challenges of using social media as the source of alcohol purchase decision-making?

3. What are the suggestions that will facilitate restriction of shared opinion on Social Media that has the tendency to tarnish the reputation or otherwise of GGBL?

### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

The outcome of this study would add to the body of knowledge in social media and online advertising campaigns. There is a paucity of empirical studies on the impact of social media advertising on consumer goods in the Ghanaian brewery sector and it is hoped that this study is a step towards bridging the knowledge and research gap between studies conducted in this area of study.

Furthermore, given the unprecedented competition in the Ghanaian brewery sector, breweries need to find several avenues of effectively reaching and engaging with their target audience. Thus, this study, it is anticipated will allow GGBL in particular and other Ghanaian breweries in general to have a better understanding of social media advertising and the issues that must be addressed in order to maximize its benefits. Again, the findings of this study will bring to the fore the challenges inherent in social media implementation and by so doing, equipping Ghanaian breweries with the requisite skills and tools to mitigate these challenges. It is further hoped that by knowing the position of social media advertising in the marketing communication mix, the uncertainty among Ghanaian breweries and the experimentation and misuse of social media will be addressed. This study will be of benefit to organizations that are still in their infancy with regard to adopting social media.

Additionally, given that almost all African countries share similar business environment and characteristics (especially sub-Saharan Africa). The findings of this study can be equally used and built upon by academics, students and researchers on the continent.

## **1.6 Scope and Limitations of the Study**

Marketing communications has several aspects such as advertising, sales promotions; publicity; personal selling etc. However, this study was limited only to the role of social media in the purchasing decision making process of GGBL's customers. Statistics from Guinness Ghana Breweries (GGB) sources, producers of the drink, put Ghana's consumption rate at more than 10 million glasses a day, pegging it only behind Ireland, the Americas, Nigeria and the Cameroon. It is also revealed that Ghana ranks fifth in the world in the consumption of Guinness Stout (Asante, 2005). It is as a result of this revelation that this study chose Guinness stout to find out whether there is a relationship between television commercials of this product, perception of the brand, and consumers' purchasing behaviour.

The Social Media tools to be used in the research were limited to Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp. This is because these are the most commonly used sites in Ghana. It must however be mentioned that focusing only GGBL limits the possibility to analyze the topic from the wider scope of Ghanaian breweries. This notwithstanding, it is the conviction of the researcher that the findings would throw more light on the effects of social media in the purchasing decisions of customers of alcoholic beverages in Ghana.

## **1.7 Organization of Chapters**

This study contained in five chapters and the composition of the various chapters is:

*Chapter One: Introduction.* This chapter briefly introduces the topic, the key concepts, research objectives and the research methods used. A brief overview of the chapters that follows will also be discussed.

*Chapter Two: Literature Review.* In this chapter a theoretical background of Social Media and marketing communication and the models of communication will be addressed. The evolution of Social Media and how it fits in the Marketing Communication Mix is examined. The researcher will make use of various sources from journals, articles, books and other authentic publications to fully give a concrete theory of Social Media.

*Chapter Three: Research Methodology.* This section gives the methodologies that will be used by the researcher in addressing the research problem. Past methods used by other researchers in the same field will be acknowledged.

*Chapter Four: Data Collection and Analysis.* To give practical application of the study at hand, this chapter will bring in data collected from the field and these findings will be analyzed and presented in an orderly fashion.

*Chapter Five: Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations:* Summary, conclusion and recommendations for the research will be discussed in this chapter. The recommendations will be based on the findings and knowledge

gained from the research thus giving ways that banks can best use Social Media for marketing purposes.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

In this chapter, the major theories, concepts and constructs were reviewed. Specifically, this chapter defined and explained key concepts such as marketing communications, social media and how social media impacts on the overall marketing communications of firms. Furthermore a conceptual framework was developed for the study.

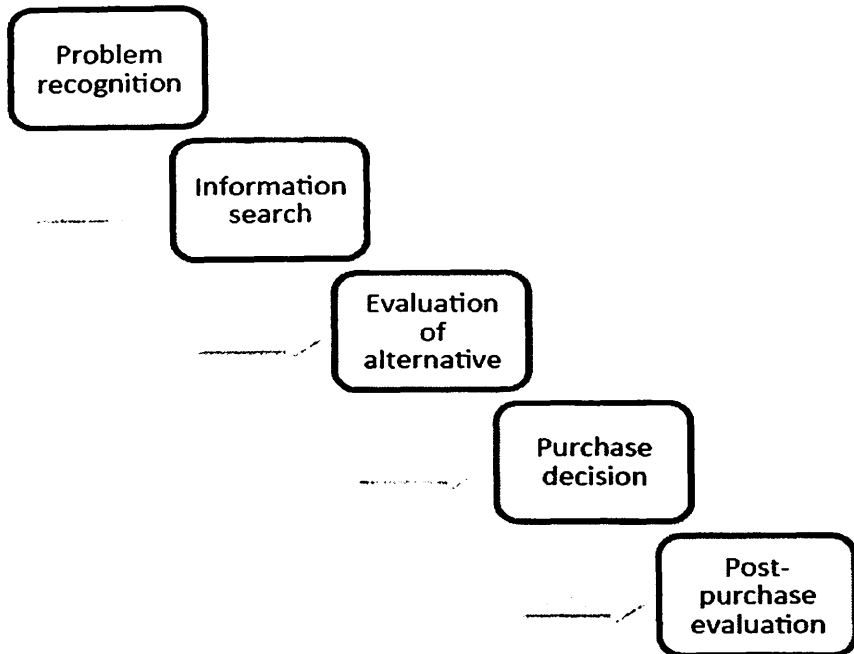
#### **2.2 Consumers' Purchase Decision Behavior**

Consumer behavior defined as the study of the processes involved when individuals or groups select, purchase, use or dispose of products, services, ideas or experiences to satisfy needs and desires (Solomon, et al, 2010). Another definition of consumer behavior is the dynamic interaction of Cognition, Affect and Behaviour, and environmental events by which human beings conduct the exchange aspects of their lives (Schiffman, et al, 2008). Study of consumer behavior has shifted from why people purchase to consumption behavior (Blythe, 2008). One of the important aspects of consumer behavior is market segmentation, because consumers within the segment are more or less similar in terms of products needs and desire (Schiffman, et al, 2008). Market segmentation consists of different categories for instance demographics (age, gender, social class), geographic (region, country differences), psychographic (personality, life style) and behavioral (brand loyalty, benefit desire) (Solomon, et al, 2010).

Consumers' physical and social environment have huge influences on consumers' purchase decision and can make a big difference in their desire and motives for product purchase (Blythe, 2008). One of the important dimensions in consumer behavior is social time, which means the time in relation to social processes and rhythms and schedules in society such as working hours, opening hours, eating hours, and other institutionalized schedules (Solomon, et al, 2010). The communication situation where consumers receive information has an impact on their purchasing decision behavior (Hawkins and Mothersbaugh, 2010).

Everyday consumers make numerous decisions in their daily life. Consumer behavior is not just summarizing in making decision or the act of purchasing, consumer interaction and the range of experiences that associated with consuming is a part of consumer behavior as well (Schiffman, et al, 2008). The central part of consumer behavior is consumers' decision making. A decision process involves in several steps (figure 2.1).

Figure 2.1 Consumer decision-making process



Source: Kardes et al. (2011)

### 2.2.1 Consumers' Purchasing Decision and Problem Recognition

Problem recognition is the first step of consumers' purchase decisions process that may occur because consumer has a desire for something new (Kardes et al, 2011). Consumers' purchase decisions begin with the result of problems or a single problem. There are those decisions which easily recognized, defied, and solved (needs of food) but there are unexpected problem as well which hard to solve (needs of car). There are different factors that affect problem recognition step such as social factors, cultural factors, reference groups, and environmental factors (Hawkins and Mothersbaugh, 2010).

### **2.2.2 Consumers' purchasing decision and information search**

Once a problem is recognized, consumers begin to seek about relevant information. There are two types of information sources; internal and external information search. Internal search involves the consumers' memory about the products, and external search includes word of mouth, stores visit, trial and online social networking and social media (Kardes, et al, 2011). Nowadays, online environment effectively involves in purchase decisions process and Internet has become an important tool for information search. The different types of decisions influence on the level and direction of the search (Hawkins and Mothersbaugh, 2010).

### **2.2.3 Consumers' purchasing decision and evaluation of alternative**

In this step consumers start to compare and evaluate several alternatives in terms of products features and their desire and needs. Sometimes consumers' choices are based on simple decision such as "buy the cheapest products" but there are some decisions that are complex and consist of different processes and stages. In this stage consumers consider which alternative would be the best to fulfill their need (Blythe, 2008).

### **2.2.4 Consumers' purchasing decision and product choice (purchase decision)**

Once consumers have found their relevant alternatives and evaluated them, they should make their choice among the alternatives. Consumers choose the certain

products because the product appeals to them. The choice can be influenced by the gathered information from different sources therefore Internet is an effective tool in this stage (Hawkins and Mothersbaugh, 2010).

### **2.2.5 Consumers' purchasing decision and post-purchase evaluation**

The quality of the decision becomes important in this stage of process and how well the choice worked out. Consumers start to compare their perceptions of the product with their expectations (Kardes et al, 2011).

### **2.2.6 Different types of consumers' purchase decision processes**

The level of purchase involvement defined as the level of concern for, or interest in, the purchase process triggered by the need to consider a particular purchase (Hawkins and Mothersbaugh, 2010). There are different types of consumers' purchase decision processes with different level of involvement (Hawkins and Mothersbaugh, 2010).

- *Nominal decision-making*: it occurs when consumers involve with the purchase in very low involvement. Nominal decision-making includes problem recognition and internal search but does not include the evaluation of alternative step.
- *Limited decision making*: it is similar to nominal decision making with the difference that in limited decision making there is a limited amount of external search and a few alternatives are evaluated.

- *Extended decision-making*: it occurs when consumers are highly involved with purchase, and the decision-making becomes increasingly complex. Consumers complete all the steps of purchasing decision process.

### **2.3 Marketing Communication**

Marketing communication is an audience-centered activity (Belch and Belch, 2003). Everything that people and organizations do in the name of marketing communication should be, first and foremost, focused on the consumers (Sutton and Klein, 2003). Organizations engage with a variety of audiences in order to pursue their marketing and business objectives. Marketing communications provides the means by which brands and organizations are first presented to the audiences and then to engage them over the long term (Belch and Belch, 2003). The goal is to stimulate a succession of purchases, and the task of marketing communications is to engage audiences to enable transactions (Belch and Belch, 2003). Rossiter and Bellman (2005) defined it as Marketer originated messages, placed in various media, their purpose being to sell the brand by showing it, saying things about it, or both, in a manner that establishes the marketer's desired position for the brand in the minds of target customers. This definition brings out the idea that messages sent by the marketer are controlled and developed by the marketer using various channels of communication (Sutton and Klein, 2003, Mangold and Faulds, 2009).

The role of marketing communications is to deliver against one or more of the following four tasks (Rossiter and Bellman, 2005):

- It can *inform* and make potential customers aware of an organization's offering.
- It may attempt to *persuade* current and potential customers of the desirability of entering in to an exchange relationship.
- Communications can also be used to *reinforce* experiences. This may take the form of *reminding* people of past transactions and as well provide *reassurance* or comfort.
- Finally marketing communication can act as a *differentiator*, particularly in markets where there is little to separate competing products and brands. Marketing communications plays a vital role in the development of brands and is the means by which products become brands, that is, how customers can see how a product is different and understand what the brand stands for and what its values are (Rossiter and Bellman, 2005).

### **2.3.1 Elements of the Marketing Communication Mix**

The Marketing Communication Mix, also known as the promotional mix, is composed of 5 traditional elements which are advertising, personal selling, public relations, publicity, direct marketing and sales promotion (Mangold and Faulds, 2009). Of these five, advertising has often been regarded as the only marketing communication tool thus leading to the belief that marketing communication is only about sending information to the customer through electronic and print

media (television, radio, newspapers and magazines) and not face to face. Below is a brief discussion on the elements of the Marketing Communication Mix.

### ***Advertising***

Advertising is a one way, non personal and planned paid promotion or message aimed at influencing the attitude and behavior of a broad audience about a product or a service (Frey and Rudloff, 2010). The main aim of advertising is to create awareness, hence the term 'awareness builder', which will eventually lead to the purchasing of a product or service. Advertising originated in the Babylon age and has been widely used by marketers. Its attributes of being cost effective, giving complete control of message to the marketers and its ability to create brand value, have built its popularity. Some consumers and companies treat it as a form of mass communication which uses the push and pull marketing strategies. However, since it is a one-to-many type of communication, biased and low in credibility, consumers have lost trust in it. According to Mangold and Faulds (2009), consumers have become more educated and want to control messages they receive. This has led to the current shaking up of the advertising industry.

### ***Direct Marketing***

Direct marketing is a management concept, a multi-level communication and distribution tool (Hesse et al. 2007). It is accountable, interactive and used to ensure direct response from customers (Belch and Belch, 2003). A Direct Marketing campaign accesses huge recorded databases to build profiles of potential customers and provide valuable marketing information for effective

direct targeting. It involves activities like direct mail, telemarketing, database management, direct response ads through the direct mail, the internet and various broadcast and print media (Belch and Belch, 2003). Direct Marketing is divided into two elements, namely building a quality database over a long period and cost monitoring and controlling. The controlling elements indicate that there is much control given to the marketer as opposed to Social Media which puts control in the hands of the consumers. Belch and Belch (2003) suggests that the main aim of direct marketing is to stimulate the targeted audience to take a now action, and create an individualized customer relationship.

### ***Personal Selling***

According to Frey and Rudloff (2010), personal selling is a flexible, accountable and measurable one-to-one marketing communication tool centered on building trust and a relationship between the seller and the buyer. The main focus of personal selling besides selling is to solve customer problems, add value and assist in purchasing decision making and building trust and relationships with customers, which may result in brand loyalty. Personal selling is more common in business-to-business markets and in situations where there is much competition and specialized products. There are great chances of customer-seller relationships being sacrificed at the expense of attaining a quick sale. The fact that personal selling is relationship based, gives a basis for Social Media which is based on relationship building.

### ***Sales Promotion***

Sales promotion refers to marketing and communication activities that change the price/value relationship of a product or service perceived by the target, thereby generating immediate sales and alter long term value (Belch and Belch, 2003). To initiate instant sales or specific purchase, sales force and consumers are given incentives that result in tangible and non tangible benefits (Belch and Belch, 2003; Percy, 2008). However, Schultz et al., (1998) posit that one disadvantage of sales promotion is that it does not change the opinion of the buyer about the product but rather initiates immediate or short term results. Marketers however misuse sales promotion in Social Media through posting promotions and not engaging with customers.

### ***Public Relations***

Public Relations is a proactive and reactive management function used to evaluate public attitudes, identify the policies and procedures of an individual or organization with the intention of executing a programme of action to earn public understanding and acceptance (Johnston and Zawawi, 2009). Although it is credible, Public Relations does not allow organizations to control messages and responses of customers on Social Media.

Many debates have been going on as to how companies and marketers can best take advantage of these elements to achieve their organizational goals effectively

and efficiently. Integration of the all the elements seems to be the best way organizations can effectively use all the elements discussed above.

### **2.3.3 Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC)**

Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) coordinates and controls the promotional mix element to send unified and focused messages to customers based on the organizational goals (Belch and Belch, 2003). The American Association of Advertising Agencies (4As) (cited in Belch and Belch, 2003) defines Integrated Marketing Communication as a concept of marketing communication planning that recognizes the added value of a comprehensive plan that evaluates the strategic roles of a variety communication disciplines for example, general advertising, direct response, sales promotion, and public relations – and combines these disciplines to provide clarity, consistency and maximum communication impact. Adopting this strategy helps organizations gain Return on Investment on marketing messages, avoid duplication of messages and give organizations the ability to adopt a centralized theme for the company and the brand (Belch and Belch, 2003; Mangold and Faulds, 2009). The IMC concept emphasizes the forming of an image in the mind of the customer which in the process maintains a lasting relationship with the organization. In adopting IMC managers must be committed to the strategy and remove barriers to integration.

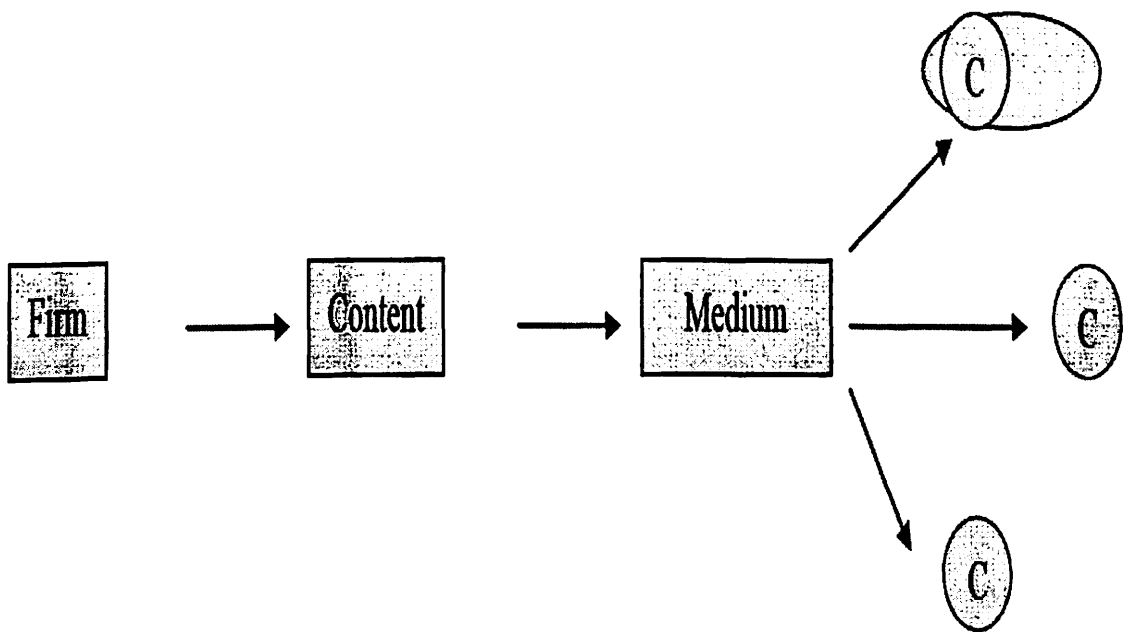
Companies adopt IMC strategies because they remove complete dependency on trade advertising which may be costly to the company. The role of IMC is to counsel, mediate, support and add value to business units. This in turn helps the organization create demand and brand awareness, enhance attitudes, influence purchase intention, facilitate purchase and differentiate brand from competitors (Brown and Hayes, 2008). Customers will be able to acquire, build and retain relationships with all stakeholders and shareholders through IMC. Companies always try to control the messages as mentioned before but this is proving to be a challenge in the new era of Social Media because it demands that control be left in the hands of the customers as they have begun to be resistant to organization controlled marketing messages (Mangold and Faulds, 2009; Brown and Hayes, 2008). Post modern customers being dynamic in nature have advanced and are characterized by chaos, confusion, complexity and contradiction, thus fragmenting the market segments (Brown, 2002).

#### **2.3.4 Model of Computer Media Communication**

Hoffman and Novak (1996) gave three models of communication. These form the basis for traditional marketing communication and the new marketing communication. In Hoffman and Novak's (1996) opinion the first model is the mass media. Mass media is an early mode of communication where transfer of information is one way or one to many, consumers were regarded as consumers of information/content and had to respond only by purchasing or not purchasing the marketed product. According to the two scholars, the firm (F) sends some content,

(advertising message of a product), through a medium, (electronic media, radio or print media, newspaper) and the consumer would be the recipient of the information and there would be no form of interaction whatsoever. Hoffman and Novak (1996) agree with past research on the issue of one-to-many. Figure 2.2 gives a summary of this model.

**Figure 2.2 The Model of Marketing Communication for Interpersonal Mediated Communication**



Source: Hoffman and Novak (1996)

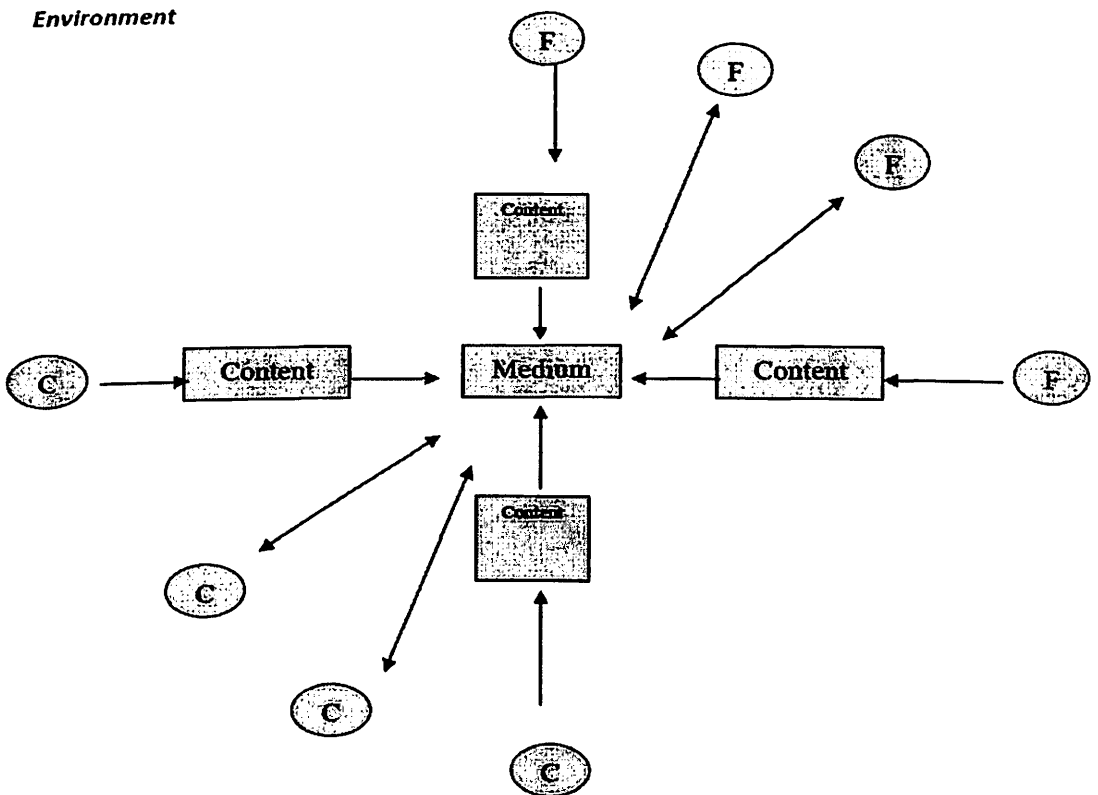
The first model can be equated to the transactional communication strategy as suggested by Lagrosen (2005). This is characterized by passive customers who are led through a sequential process from awareness to purchase. However, part of Lagrosen's first model is in line with Hoffman and Novak's second model because less emphasis is put on interaction on the internet. In this model success is measured by the number of sales generated through direct content sent to consumers through websites.

The second model is Interpersonal and Computer-Mediated Communication. It is more advanced in the sense that although it is based on traditional media, it initiates interaction between two customers through a medium. This model can easily be extended to many-to-many interpersonal communications in the form of online chat rooms or face to face group meetings. Lagrosen (2005) defines this model as the mass relationship communication strategy. The main objective of this model is to develop relationships with a large group of customers and interaction with mass communication tools, to gain a profit (Lagrosen, 2005). There is use of advanced, elaborative websites and effective interaction opportunities. Success in this sector is measured by the number of users a company interacts with. To some extent this can be a replacement for traditional advertising (Lagrosen, 2005).

The third model, the New Model of Hypermedia Computer Mediated Communication (HCMC) gives a scenario whereby consumers communicate with the medium and through the medium (Hoffman and Novak, 1996). There is more interaction between the firms and the consumers and it can lead to a human community online. In this model the sender of content can also be the receiver of the message and hence a gradual adoption of the recent User Generated Content era finds its origins. Digital convergence is the process of bringing together various information and communication systems, telephone, television, video, radio and print, with the aim of unifying the system facilitated by the network

platform. The new model focuses more on building long term bonds and associations between consumers and firms. The consumer becomes an active participant thus leading to an active model of marketing. Consumers have embraced this new media but a lot needs to be done as this new model pushes firms to be more adaptive to continual technological changes. This leads to the discussion of internet or digital marketing which has its origins in HCMC (Lagrosen, 2005).

**Figure 2.3 New Model of Marketing Communication in Hypermedia Computer- Mediated Environment**  
*Environment*



Source: Hoffman and Novak (1996)

## 2.4 Social Media

Blackshaw and Nazzaro (2004) define social media marketing as a variety of information sources available online that are created, initiated, circulated and used by customers for educating and communicating with each other about products, brands, services, personalities and issues. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) describe social media as a group of internet based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0 that facilitates the creation and exchange of user-generated content. Additionally, social media have been defined as a series of technological innovations in terms of both hardware and software that facilitate inexpensive content creation, interaction, and interoperability by online users (Berthon et al., 2012).

Social media differ from traditional computer-mediated communications in three primary ways: a shift in the locus of activity from the desktop to the web (meaning greater accessibility); a shift in locus of value production from the firm to the consumer (deriving from increased interaction/interactivity); and a shift in the locus of power away from the firm to the consumer (Berthon et al., 2012). Social media use internet and web-based technologies to transform broadcast media monologues into social media dialogues (many to many) (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010). They support the democratization of information by transforming individuals from mere content consumers into content producers (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010). By its nature social media is built on three key elements: content, communities and Web 2.0 (Ahlqvist et al., 2010). The three key elements mean that consumers and companies form online communities

which allow them to collaboratively and collectively interact, engage, share, create and co-create user-generated-content on mobile and web-based technologies which are founded on Web 2.0 ideologies and technologies (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2011; Kietzmann et al., 2011).

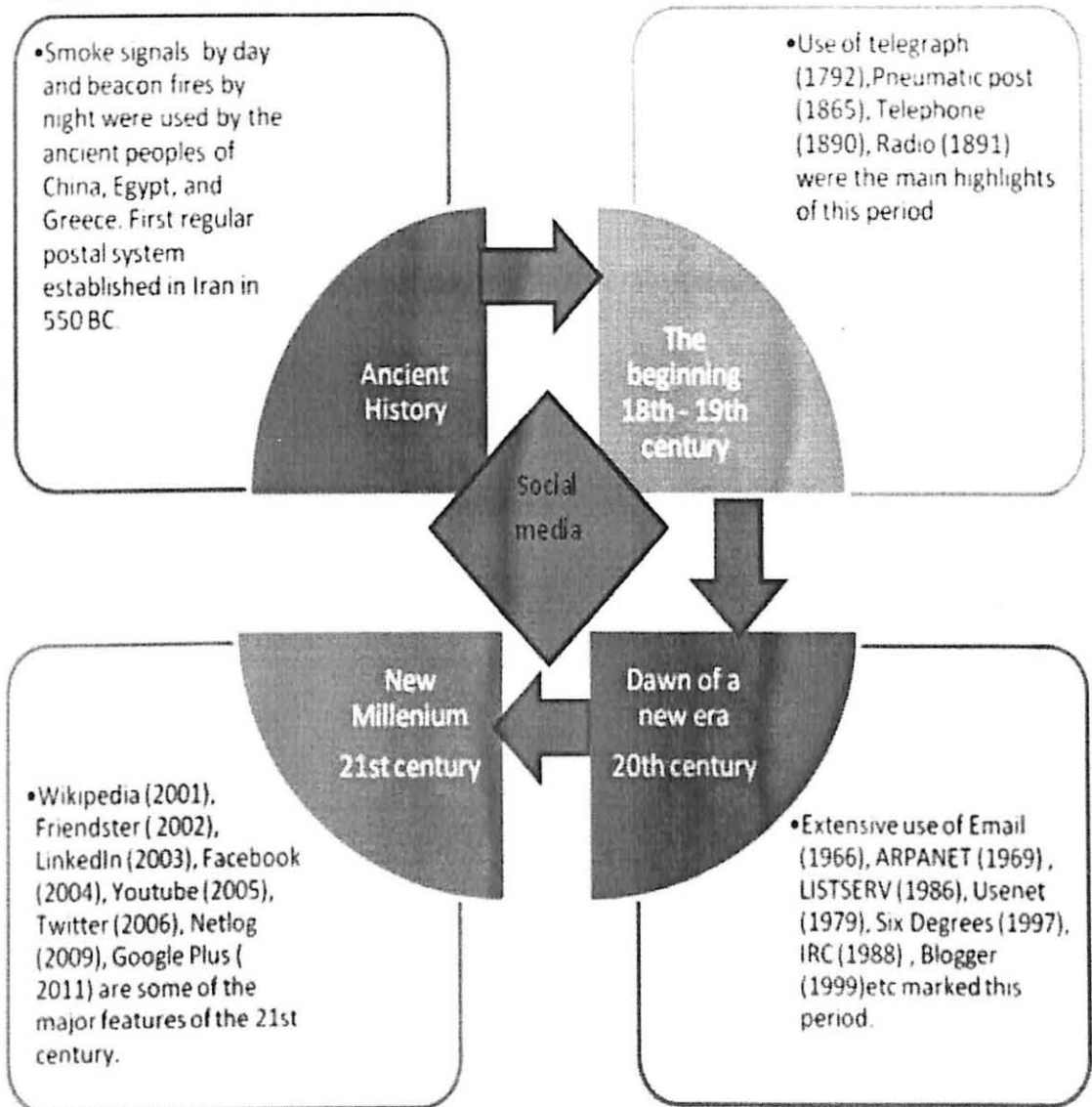
#### **2.4.1 Brief History of Social Media**

When people think of social media, they generally think of Facebook, Youtube and twitter (Baruah, 2012). However, in reality it is more than that. The earliest ways to send messages over long distances were probably both audio and visual. People used to communicate smoke signals by day and beacon fires by night in ancient China, Egypt, and Greece. Drums were used in many parts of the world to extend the range of the human voice for communication as well. The seeds of social media were sown during 550 BC when the regular postal system was established in Iran where horse riders and horse-drawn wagons carried mail. Usually, mail consisted of governmental dispatches and was delivered from one place to another (Baruah, 2012). The evolution of social media can be gauged from Figure 2.1.

As shown in Figure 2.4, the 18th and 19th century were breakthrough period where devices like the telegraph (1792), telephone (1890) and radio (1891) ushered in a new era of the sending and receiving messages over long distances (Baruah, 2012). The increasing number of express messages between businesses,

financial and legal offices and banks in urban areas, gave rise to new methods of telegram and letter transportation. The pneumatic post was introduced to combat the shortcomings of the telegraphic network in Paris. The invention of telephone and radio took the meaning of communication to another level. The 20th century was marked by the growth and development of internet (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2009). With the growth and development of internet, there came era of exchange of messages from one person to another digitally or via web. Email, ARPANET, USENET, BBS (Bulletin Board System), IRC (Internet Relay Chat), Listserv, Blogger, Six Degrees, Livejournal, Napster was some of the important sites for social interactions and sharing (Zarrella, 2010).

Figure 2.4: History of social media



Source: Baruah (2012)

The 21st century saw a spurt in the growth of social networking sites by the launching of Friendster, Fotolog, Photobucket, Facebook, Twitter, Youtube etc. Social media has come a long way since the days of the telegraph and even the more recent days of Internet-relay chats (IRC), and it continues to evolve (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2009). In the last few years, social media has become a convention of the online landscape (Zarrella, 2010). Major social networks and social media

websites make changes and improvements on a fairly regular basis, so it's sure to keep evolving in coming years (Zarrella, 2010).

#### **2.4.2 The Specific Social Media Tactics and Tools Used By Firms**

The various social media tools used to interact or communicate with customers include the following:

##### **Collaborative projects**

Collaborative projects enable the joint and simultaneous creation of content by many end users and are, in this sense, probably the most democratic manifestation of UGC. The main idea underlying collaborative projects is that the joint effort of many users' leads to a better outcome than any user could achieve individually, an example of a collaborative project site is Wikipedia. From a corporate perspective, firms must be aware that collaborative projects are trending toward becoming the main source of information for many consumers (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010).

##### **Blogs**

A blog is a type of content management system (CMS) that makes it easy for anyone to publish short articles called posts (Zarrella, 2010). They are wide open and ready to interact with all kinds of people. Blogs let customers know what your business is about, and they create a space for customers to tell you exactly what they are thinking about (Niederhoffer et al., 2007). Blogs enable companies to establish and build meaningful relationships with their target, thereby

increasing customer loyalty and the number of third-party advocates for the firm. A blog is considered to be a successful marketing tool when the conversation on the blog turns into online buzz for the firm (Niederhoffer et al., 2007).

According to Kaplan and Haenlein (2010), every company with a website should have a blog that speaks to its current and potential customers as real people. However, blogs are not the right place for corporate-speak press releases; they should be conversational in tone (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010). Blogs also enable executives to improve the transparency of their companies (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010). Listening to customers' blogs is an important part of growing a business, because it gives your business a window into what the customers think about the company (Wright, 2006).

### ***Twitter***

Twitter is a microblog, which is a form of blogging that limits the size of each post; Twitter updates can contain only 140 characters (Zarrella, 2010). Most companies should be on Twitter; it is easy, cost-effective, requires very little investment of time, and can quickly prove worthwhile in increased buzz, sales, and consumer insight (Zarrella, 2010). Twitter is beneficial for engaging with customers and propagating the conversation about one's brand, products, and/or services. It is also ideal for building relationships with key stakeholders (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2010).

## **Content communities**

The main objective of content communities is the sharing of media content between users. Content communities exist for a wide range of different media types, including text, photos, videos and PowerPoint presentations (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2009). The multimedia content that is created is called User Generated Content (UGC) (Zarrella, 2010).

## **YouTube**

YouTube is an example of a content community (Zarrella, 2010). It is a video sharing service. The principle of YouTube is really simple; users upload videos and share with other people. YouTube enables users to upload a video and then, put the URL as a link on their website to send people to the video. Harnessing the powers of video is critical to the content of many social media campaigns. YouTube is the second most searched site after Google (McNealy, 2010). Maintaining a YouTube channel for one's company allows for videos to also be embedded within a company's blog, thereby cross-pollinating the sites, which in turn helps to increase website traffic. YouTube also allows for consumer engagement through user-generated content (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2010).

## **Social networking sites**

Social networking sites are applications that enable users to connect with each other (Zarrella, 2010). Users create personal information profiles, invite friends and colleagues to have access to those profiles, and send e-mails and instant

messages to each other (Zarrella, 2010). These personal profiles can include any type of information, such as photos, video, audio files, and blogs (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2009). Social networking sites are a hot topic for marketers right now, as they present a number of opportunities for interacting with customers, including via plug-in applications, groups and fan pages (Zarrella, 2010). The building blocks of a social network are user pages, known as profiles. The profile page includes different information about the person. Profiles are for real people, and companies use specific pages or groups for their company information. Customizing the different pages and profiles is a good way of reflecting your personality and brand (Zarrella, 2010).

## **Facebook**

Facebook is an example of a social networking site. According to Hennig-Thurau et al., (2010), Facebook was possibly the site that got social networking moving. It has more or less coincided with the social media revolution and is today the largest social network site to date in terms of numbers. It also has the most features useful to the social media marketers (Zarrella, 2010). Facebook allows businesses to create public profiles that have many of the same features as a user's profile. Users can connect with a page and become fans. Pages can have public messaging walls, events, photos, and custom applications (Zarrella, 2010). Not only does Facebook offer various advertising programs, but it also enables companies to create their own customized profile and share important information in the creation of their own brand community. Furthermore, Facebook provides

companies with the unique opportunity to very specifically target users and spawn a two-way conversation with consumers (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2010).

### ***LinkedIn***

LinkedIn is another social networking site that is geared towards a more professional audience. Like Facebook, there are opportunities to advertise one's business on this site, develop a profile for a company that is visible to LinkedIn users, and foster two-way relationships with individual career professionals as well as other firms (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2010).

### **2.4.3 Acceptance of Social Media**

As mentioned before customers have become more educated and knowledgeable through the use of Social Media and this has led to their resistance to marketing information. Hanna et al., (2011) affirmed that due to numerous connections consumers experience every day, consumers of media and marketing messages are now intelligent, organized and trust their own opinions and those of their peers. Thus in the opinion of Mangold and Faulds, (2009), and Kietzmann et al., (2011), Social Media is becoming a more trustworthy source of product and service information than corporate sponsored communication via traditional marketing communication elements like print media, television, emails and websites. This is because engaging on Social Media allows them to control general and marketing information; it also allows them to consult each other during buying decision-making process. Companies which ignore Social Media,

see it as a passing fad or which rely on traditional marketing elements like advertising, public relations and personal selling only may miss out the benefits of Social Media.

Despite its potential benefits some marketers and practitioners eschew Social Media. This is attributed to the lack of understanding of what Social Media is, its composition, how to engage with it and uncertainty among marketers on how to measure its effect and budget for it (Kietzmann et al., 2011). There is a lot of skepticism among practitioners emanating from a lack of strategies on how to implement Social Media. Companies that adopt Social Media may end up using a lot of experimentation or developing a sheep mentality of following what other companies are doing without knowing the direction. The next section seeks to address the role of Social Media through identifying its position in the Marketing Communication Mix.

#### **2.4.4 Position of Social Media in the Marketing Communication Mix**

In spite of the acceptance that Social Media plays a role in the Marketing Communication Mix, there are different opinion on the position that Social Media should have in the marketing communication. These differences are centered on the way it can be used.

### **Hybrid of Promotional Mix**

The Hybrid of promotional mix school of thought argues that Social Media is a new element in the Marketing Communication Mix because it plays a different role from traditional Marketing Communication Mix. According to Mangold and Faulds (2009), Social Media plays two roles; the first enables companies to talk to their customers, as they do with traditional marketing, and the second enables customers to converse with each other. Arguments are that because of the nature of Social Media and the fact that customers do not want to be marketed at, Social Media has replaced marketing communication and that Social Media is a passing fad (Mangold and Fauld, 2009).

### **Social Media as a Media**

Social Media is not a new element of the Marketing Communication Mix, but rather an innovation which builds upon already existing technology thus supporting the HCMC Model (Hoffman and Novak, 1996; Lagrosen, 2005). As proposed by Mangold and Faulds (2009) and Hoffman and Novak (1996), Social Media springs out from mixed technology and media origins that enable instantaneous, real time communication and uses multi-media formats and numerous platforms (Facebook, YouTube and blogs) with global capabilities. Other scholars who share the same view posit that Social Media is just a new channel like TV and Radio. The only advantage with it is that it reaches a large audience at a lower cost (Singh et al., 2008).

Thus what can be drawn from this school of thought is that Social Media is a new media, which comes with both traditional and new marketing benefits. However, there is a challenge in viewing it as an extension of mass communication because this may result in companies pushing adverts to customers, resulting in resistance from customers. Social Media should be used as a new channel for listening to customers, and engaging in important conversations (Constantinides and Fountain, 2008; DiStaso et al. 2011). Social Media is a not a replacement for traditional media like TV but a new marketing tool targeting a specific type of customer who prefers online communication, thus it should be integrated into the traditional marketing channels, (Bolotaeva and Cata, 2010). However, Bolotaeva and Cata, (2010) seem to argue that Social Media is a new form of the marketing mix, possibly suggesting that it is at the same level as the promotional mix.

### **Social Media as Enhancer**

Another school of thought put forward that Social Media plays a role of enhancing the Marketing Communication Mix and therefore should be incorporated in the mix (Lagrosen, 2005). It is essential because according to Parent et al. (2011), consumers are resistant to faceless and impersonal organizations in favor of more personal conversation and engagement with the brand, and involvement with or without the company's approval in creating brand personalities. Adding to that, since customers are no longer passive consumers of marketing messages, they want to co-create products and promotional services and integrate Social Media as the mix allows companies to gain trust from them.

However, according to DiStaso, et al., (2011), marketers are uncertain how to strategically incorporate Social Media. Thus Social Media should work hand in hand with marketing communication to make it more effective.

### **Social Media as a Traditional Tool**

Social Media can be used in the same way as traditional tools. It can be used as an advertising agent. Constantinides and Fountain, (2008) argued that it should be part of the public relations and Marketing Communication Mix and as a means of direct one-to-one marketing. It is the word of mouth delivered and enhanced by online communities to a larger audience and at great speed (Mangold and Faulds, 2010). Scholars like Bolotaeva and Cata, (2010) state that social networks in particular have their different 4 Ps of marketing mix which are Personal, Participatory, Physical, and Plausible. Blogs can be integrated with Customer Relationship Management, public relations and can be used for press releases.

### **Social Media as a Passing Fad**

Constantinides and Fountain (2008) contend that Social Media is not a passing fad; instead marketers should learn to co-exist and communicate with a powerful customer very sensitive to old-fashioned push marketing and by-and-large determined to participate as an equal in the marketing process. Fischer and Reuber, (2011) propose that Web 2.0 marketing will take over from traditional advertising and marketing techniques. Preibusch, et al., (2007) equate Social

Media with traditional ecommerce, but its difference is that user profile information is public and this helps in market intelligence.

## **2.5 Social Media and Consumer Behaviour**

The rise of Social Media usage by both consumers and companies seem to affect consumer behaviour. It has been observed that about 45% of people seek friends' advice before they consider making any purchase decision and most of the discussion on these subjects is done online on social networking sites. This trend has increased the reason for buyers to pay more attention to social media. According to Qualman (1994), 64% of the consumers make a first time purchase based on an online experience. Hence, the digital presence of brands now-a-days has increased to a magnanimous level mainly because of online social media. It has been noted that even though some companies get mentioned only a few times a day over the internet, others like Dell receive mentions of up to and in fact more than twenty-five thousand (25000) in just one day. According to Qualman (1994), Social media plays an important role in intensifying the relationship between the company and its customers. Effective and efficient communication channels facilitate this relationship ultimately leading to positive perceptions towards the company and hence positive purchase intentions.

According to Kim (2007), several E-companies are promoting online social communities that enabled and encouraged customers to write reviews, rate the reviews given by others and talk about products with people they trust, thus

sharing their experiences regarding product use and purchase over the internet. This facilitated a positive perception towards companies' products and lead to an increase of confidence in purchasing them. The interactions and relationships that take place within a group of people forms a graph. It facilitates methods for discussing and sharing people's brand experiences with others. These methods or mediums include messengers and online social communities and blogs like MSN, Twitter, YouTube, Friend feed and Tumblr.

According to Mir (2012), thousands of internet newsgroups and online chat rooms have emerged which are influencing the buying decisions of consumers. These are useful as when a large number of online users provide the same opinion about a brand, the credibility of the brand is increased.

It has been found that the interactive nature of social media (its ability to establish conversations among individuals, firms in communities of sellers and customers, and involve customers in content generation and value creation) has excited practitioners with its potential to better serve customers and satisfy their needs (Sashi, 2012). Formerly, customers had to wait in long queues at bank branches or on the phone to communicate with banks (Econsultancy, 2013). Nowadays, customers are able to swiftly raise their issues through social media. It has become an important method for banks to build relationships with their customers, especially to reach a younger generation (Sashi, 2012). Social media has altered people's way of life radically because of its high speed connections, ease of use and great credibility.

Trusov *et al.* (2009) explain that social networking platforms allow users to connect with each other and typically attract a small group of first time consumers. The greatest appeal of social media marketing is for the brand to make a strong impact on consumers and consumer groups (Brandz, 2010). Golden (2011) lists the characteristics of social media marketing as follows:

- **Tone:** Social media is about honesty and being authentic. Marketers need to ensure that the message to the audience is credible and reliable;
- **Conversation:** Social media marketing generates two ways conversation where the customer is an integral part of the marketing department. Customer opinions matter and impact on marketing strategy;
- **Validation:** Buyer and consumer reviews are as influential as the marketer's claims of the brands features and benefits. This sets the stage for the brand to meet consumers expectations;
- **Reach:** Social media marketing allows marketers to reach a wider audience with more dramatic results in far less time and at lower costs; and
- **Control:** Control is the single biggest challenge in social media marketing because firms about whom users discuss have no means of regulating or fine tuning information put out by these users (Golden, 2001).

Fauser et al. (2011) conducted a research study regarding the impact of social media on touch points during the consumer's purchase decision journey. Key points resulting from this research were:

- Consumers felt that information sharing, collaboration and relationship building was necessary to support ongoing communication;
- Social media marketing allowed organizations the opportunity to be in the position to offer additional sources of information regarding product benefits, product features and provide real time feedback to consumers ;
- Social networks, particularly Facebook were found to be most suitable information sharing platform at the beginning of the consumer purchase decision as many consumers relied on social recommendations; and
- Many consumers used Facebook reviews and ratings (“likes”) as the means to seek recommendations, peer advice and find product information.

If the above factors (Haque *et al.*, 2009) are positively received by consumers, this will create greater brand awareness through electronic Word-of-Mouth (eWOM) via social networking platforms, facilitate brand association with consumers, position the brand in terms of quality specifications and ultimately influence the consumer to purchase the brand and make repeat purchases (Brandz, 2010). Based on the above discussion it is concluded that social media marketing enables consumers to talk to and about the brands, thereby influencing consumer purchasing decisions (Haque *et al.*, 2009).

#### **2.4.1 The Reasons behind Online Social Networks' Influences on Consumers' Purchase Decision**

An informal means of communication (such as communication with friends, family members and co-workers), much of what you discuss is related to products and information about different products or services. Once you ask your co-workers where they bought their dress or recommend new restaurant to your friends, you are involving in Word-Of-Mouth (WOM) communication (Solomon, et al, 2010). Many choices of consumers are made within different social groups and even once consumers decide on their own, Word-Of-Mouth from other people can influence them (East et al, 2008). Word-Of-Mouth in traditional communication theory considers as possessing powerful influence on consumers' purchasing decision behavior in every steps especially information search, evaluation of alternative, and product choice (Silverman, 2001). Word-Of-Mouth can also be described as an engagement of consumers in positive or negative communication or an outcome of satisfaction or dissatisfaction experiences. WOM is person-to-person communication, regarding brands, products, services, companies, and organizations that have an impact on consumers' purchase decision (Evans, et al, 2009).

This type of communication is more reliable form of marketing and can be an efficient tool (Solomon, et al, 2010). Past research has shown that WOM has more impact than traditional marketing tools (Solomon, et al, 2010). Social influences for instance WOM, can change people's feelings, actions, opinions, or behaviors (Huang et al. 2011). Someone's direct recommendations possess power and have

impact on purchase decisions. Although WOM is powerful especially once consumers are unfamiliar with products. It can be also harmful for companies when negative WOM occurs or it can be rumors. Negative and positive WOM is easy to spread, especially online (Solomon, et al, 2010). Recent research showed that positive WOM is more effective than negative WOM and it depends on relationship between consumers (East et al, 2008).

Word-Of-Mouth communication is a main part of online communication where consumers exchange and share their knowledge, opinions and experiences and has an impact on consumers' purchasing decisions. The online communities are flexible, and may be based on a wide range of cultural and social interests (Brown, et al, 2007). Online Word-Of-Mouth communication is cheaper, faster, and more effective than the other marketing tools (Solomon, et al, 2010). There are three keys influence of Word-Of-Mouth communication on consumers' purchase decision (Brown, et al, 2007):

- Tie strength: a multidimensional construct that represents the strength of the dyadic interpersonal relationships in the context of social networks
- Homophily: members of a group are similar in terms of attributes
- Source credibility: impact of source expertise and source bias on credibility of information

Online Word-Of-Mouth communication is through online social networking sites, blogs, online discussion forums, virtual communities, and rating/reviews sites

(Goldsmith, 2006). Online WOM allows consumers to gather and obtain information from variety of groups of people, not only from people they know (Goldsmith, 2006). A survey that has done by ACNielsen (2007) found that most consumers are relied on online opinions for their purchase decision. According to study by Li et al. (2007), 50 percent of adult users of online social networks share and tell about the products that they like. Information search is one of the consumers' purchase decision steps and consumers like to search for information about products to reduce risk and uncertainty, which affect consumers' purchase decision and lead them to have a better purchase decision. Many consumers check other consumers' recommendations (WOM) before making any purchasing decision especially when it comes to buy new products (Solomon, et al, 2010).

## **2.6 Challenges**

Social Media present opportunities to organizations but it also throws up challenges which can have an effect on the organization. This section looks at some of the challenges faced by organizations when using Social Media and the possible solutions to those challenges.

### **2.6.1 Resistance from Customers**

When advertising is done aggressively on social media, marketers risk losing customers since they tend to resist these sort of adverts. Thus to overcome this, Bolotaeva and Cata (2010), proposed that companies should see to it that conversations are based around online participants' communities. Findings by

Kelly et al. (2010) indicate that consumers dislike, resent and are impatient with advertising on social networks as they find it irrelevant. Traditional marketing communications are losing their influence on customer behavior because of customer empowerment. 60 per cent of US consumers have a much more negative picture about Marketing and 70 per cent of consumers do not respond to advertising as often as they did a few years ago (Bolotaeva and Cata, 2010).

### **2.6.2 Management Perception**

Traditional managers feel Social Media exposes the company because it requires them to be transparent and open and allows the customer to have control of marketing messages. DiStaso et al., (2011) found out that marketers do not see the value of Social Media and do not know how to link Social Media sales with engagement. They also do not know how to systematically monitor Social Media, or how to accurately analyze and to determine engagement in providing value and incorporate Social Media strategically. Since content on blogs cannot be edited, negative comments posted by customers can lead to negative image.

### **2.6.3 Lack of Control of Brand Information on Social Media**

Since Social Media is based on user generated content, customers are bound to share their experiences and views about brand and product, thus marketers have no control on the content created and shared by customers (Bolotaeva and Cata, 2010; DiStaso et al., 2011). Unsatisfied customers can use it as a source to air their grievances on blogs and websites and this leads to possibly damaging

information circulating in the network (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010). Companies are failing to control Social Media, to keep up with the dynamic Social Media environment and to have the same influence on changing customer buying behavior as they did in the traditional era (DiStaso et al., 2011). Companies in their desperate effort to control Social Media have developed policies that will give them the leverage to control it. However, some companies have unclear policies and do not know what is acceptable on Social Media platforms. Complete lack of control and accountability allows everyone to become a self-proclaimed expert and influences those who are not able to distinguish between quality and nonsense, making it easy for a brand to be easily tarnished (DiStaso et al., 2011).

#### **2.6.4 Measurement of Social Media Investment**

Companies face the challenge of not knowing how to measure Social Media beyond the number of fans and the conversation on Social Media. The measurement of Social Media according to DiStaso et al., (2011), is its credibility, impact and effect on brand, effect on influencing customer behavior, behavioral outcomes, measure corporate reputation, and corporate communication strategy.

#### **2.6.5 Privacy**

Privacy is often understood as the right to be left alone (Wang et al., 1998). The invasion of privacy on the Internet is commonly regarded as the unauthorized collection, disclosure, or other use of personal information (Wang et al., 1998). Even before the Internet era, consumers' personal information was often

collected, analyzed, and exchanged for various marketing purposes such as direct marketing and telemarketing. However, pre-electronic consumer transactions provided a natural protection of consumer privacy, particularly where transactions were made in cash and consumers refused to release personal information. According to Wang et al., (1998), privacy-related issues and improper behavior that makes internet users apprehensive includes improper access, improper collection, improper monitoring, improper analysis, improper transfer, unwanted solicitation and improper storage.

## **2.7 Empirical Studies on the Effects of Social Media on Consumer Purchase Decisions**

The relationship between social media and consumer decision-making present that social media affects advertising attitudes, brand attitudes, and purchasing intentions of consumer (Taining, 2012). Altaf (2014) conducted a study to determine the effect and role of social media consumer buying decision. This research gives explanation on how individuals are attending, processing, and selecting the information on social media before a purchase. The findings indicated that individuals pursue an active role in information search on social media comparing to mass media. The authors concluded that the accessibility and transparency that social media offers has led to changes in how consumers position themselves in today's market, in which it is inevitable and necessary for companies to equip with a new marketing mindset. The study also found that social media plays an important role in influencing the consumer's buying

decisions. This is because consumer's regularly read the blogs on internet to view online advertisements; they use social media to provide feedback about the products/services they use and that some of the respondents use social media to view online advertisements to keep themselves aware of the new products/services.

Yogesh and Yesha's (2014) study focused on assessing the impact of usage of social media on purchase decision process and also examined the usage pattern and its influences the five stages of purchase process. The study finds that the social media is most widely used in information source for perceived convenience, effectiveness and perceived credibility. Also, the social media reviews and opinions affect the purchase decision process; however, tendency of share their experiences post purchase is surprisingly low. The authors further found that the convenience for searching and perception of users as effective platform for searching are the major contributors for information search and that social media is also perceived to be credible source of information. The authors further found that social media users seem to trust reviews on social media and surprisingly, reviews from strangers and friends are almost equally trusted. Thus, firms could use discounts or incentives to have consumers recommend their product via social media. The reviews on social media induce or dissuade purchases.

Forbes and Vespoli (2013) investigated consumers who made a purchase of an item based on the recommendation of a peer or contact via social media results

indicate that consumers are buying either very inexpensive, or very expensive items, and are doing so based on recommendations from people they would not consider “opinion influencers or leaders”. In addition, results indicate a slow shift from more traditional forms of social media like Facebook to quicker types of social media like Twitter. Numerous respondents indicated their desire for information now, not even a day or two old, and this research indicates a shift towards that form of social media which is consistent with general themes of today's social media.

Leerapong and Mardjo (2013) examined the factors that influence their online purchase decision through online social network, particularly Facebook. The customers ranked in order of importance relative advantage, trust, perceived risk, compatibility as the factors that encouraged or discouraged them from purchasing product through Facebook. Sharma and Rehman (2012) found that positive or negative information about a product or a brand available on the Social Media has significant overall influence on consumers purchase behaviour. The customers spread positive word of mouth through social media.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter consisted of the research methodology and it discussed sampling procedure and techniques, detailed the study design including data collection instrument and data analysis.

#### **3.2 Research Design**

A Research design is a strategic blueprint for the collection, measurement and analysis of data whose choice is dependent on the stage to which knowledge about the research topic has advanced (Sekaran and Bougie, 2010). Owing to the fact that research on social media is still at its infancy level, an exploratory research approach is needed to achieve the goal of this study. The nature of research questions addressed required that besides the study being exploratory it also needed to be both quantitative and qualitative. This need necessitated the use of a mixed methods research approach (Yin, 2003). Again, the survey approach was used to collect data from the customers of GGBL. The survey strategy is a popular and a common strategy in research that is usually associated with the deductive approach (Yin, 2003). Survey allows the collection of large amount of data from a sizeable population in a highly economical way. Specifically, the cross-sectional method was employed as data was collected once at a time. The reasons for chosen the survey design is to produce quantitative descriptions of some aspects of the study population. This is also to obtain standardized

information from and/or about the subjects being studied. Another reason is because it is easier to administer and analyzed since the data to be collected involved asking customers of GGBL structured and predefined questions.

### **3.3 Research Data Sources**

There were two main sources of data that could have been used by the researcher, namely primary and secondary data. In this study the researcher used both primary and secondary sources of data.

#### **3.3.1 Primary data**

The primary data collected was in the form of administered questionnaires (Sekaran and Bougie, 2010). The questionnaires were used because they are easy to administer, cheap and allowed the respondents to complete the questionnaires at their convenience and therefore encouraging better response rate. A questionnaire can generate both quantitative and qualitative data. If a questionnaire involves closed questions it can quantitative in nature. However, if the questions are open ended the researcher cannot quantify them, thus they fall under qualitative. Structured and open ended questionnaires were used for data collection. Open ended questions allowed respondents to answer questions in the way they wanted and closed questions helped the respondents to respond quickly (Yin, 2003).

### **3.3.2 Secondary data**

Secondary data are required for the background of the study while other researchers greatly rely on them for the whole project, for example when doing a historical study or nationwide study that used official statistics as it was in this research. An advantage of using this kind of data is that it has not been produced for the specific purposes of social research, and can therefore be the basis of a form of unobtrusive inquiry (Yin, 2003). This study therefore used secondary data to serve as a guide on what the experts on the subject matter have said. The secondary data was mainly extracted from sources such as GGBL's website, newsletters, articles, journals, etc.

### **3.4 Target Population of the Study**

The target population is the complete group of individuals or companies that the researcher wishes to investigate (Hair et al., 2007). It is defined in terms of availability of elements, time frame, geographical boundaries and topic of interest. The target population was drinkers of GGBL's alcoholic beverages as well as customers who use social media such as Facebook, Twitter, Whatsapp and Instagram. The study contacted both drinkers and users of social media because they could tell the impact of social media on their alcohol purchasing decision.

### **3.5 Sampling**

A sample is referred to as the percentage or fraction of the population that answers the research question (Neuman, 2007). It can be said that the reasons for

undertaking surveys is to enable the researcher generalize from the sample to the population that the hypothesis regarding attitudes, behaviour among others can be made (Yin, 2003). Thus how respondents are selected for a particular study is very critical for the success or otherwise of the study. This study employed the convenient sampling technique which is a non-probability sampling method. Non-probability sample is a sample selected in some fashion other than those suggested by probability theory (Neuman, 2007). The researcher relied on the convenient sampling method because allow the study to select subjects based on their willingness to participate in the study. Again, the study used the convenient sampling technique because it enabled the study to have reasonable control over the sample, use judgment to select cases or units which best allowed the study to answer the research questions and achieve the objectives of the study.

### **3.5.2 Sample Size**

Deciding the size of the sample, among scholars is a flexible matter, meaning the researcher can use any number depending on the cost and availability of funds and time and participants (Singh and Nath, 2005). Singh and Nath (2005) added that there is no specific number or percentage that determines the size of an adequate sample as long as it is a representation of the targeted population. However a greater number is encouraged (Sekaran and Bougie, 2010). The researcher therefore used a sample of two hundred customers and this sample size was arrived at based on the constraints of time and financial resources.

### **3.6 Data Collection Instrument**

The main data collection method used in this study was the structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was based on the literature review and the research questions. A questionnaire is a written list of questions, the answers to which are recorded by respondents (Collis and Hussey, 2003). The vital goals of a questionnaire are to collect accurate data with maximum reliability and validity, and to obtain information relevant to the objectives of survey. Questionnaires are ubiquitous and employed more frequently than other methods (Yin, 2003). In the questionnaire, respondents are required to read questions, interpret what is expected and write down or record with answers independently (Collis and Hussey, 2003). The questionnaire essentially comprised closed ended questions in order to avoid ambiguities and biases. The reasons for using the questionnaire were that it was relatively economical, could ensure anonymity, contained questions for specific purposes, existing questionnaires could be used or modified and could eliminate bias.

### **3.7 Data Collection Procedure**

Since GGBL's alcoholic beverages such as Guinness was popular in Pubs, during social festivities and festivals, the researcher contacted popular Ghanaian Pubs and eateries to sample the views of drinkers and users of social media. The question of getting the necessary co-operation for the purpose of data collection has been fraught with a lot of problems; especially with regard to error free responses and the number of returned and completed questionnaires. To avoid this, the researcher personally administered the questionnaires. The likert scale

was deployed since it was deemed to be an excellent means of measuring the attitude of respondents towards an attribute. The likert scale is user friendly and reduces uncertainty, confusion and misunderstanding. The advantage here is that it helps to reduce non response by eliminating respondent fatigue (high response rate is very critical for every research because it makes it more credible. The relevance and importance of the likert scale also lies in the unequivocal ordinality of response ratings such as “strongly agree: strongly disagree”, “agree” and “disagree”.

Fieldwork to collect the data for this study took two weeks. Responses were judged to be unacceptable when respondents' scoring does not differ. For instance when respondents answered all questions with the same answer (ticking all “1” or all “5”). Such responses were struck out and rejected so as not to affect the validity of the study. Again, where respondents failed to answer all the questions, (less than 10%), their responses were equally be rejected and was not be part of the data analysis.

### **3.8 Data Analysis**

The analytical procedure consists of techniques to conceptualize and analyze the data so that they result in theories and findings (Ghauri and Groomhaug, 2005). Sekaran and Bougie (2010) agree with this notion and added that there are three stages involved in data analysis, namely data reduction, data display and drawing and verification. These procedures were observed during the data analysis

process. Given the varied sources of data gathered for the study, the researcher had to address how the data would be processed and analyzed. The essence of analyzing the information from the research questions was to summarize the data in such a way that it both answered the stated research questions and as well as meet the research objectives.

The data collected was analyzed in both descriptive and quantitative forms such using frequency tables, percentages etc. The datasets so collected were coded and translated to an SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science). In analyzing the data, a statistical software programme, Statistical Programme for Social Science, (SPSS), was used. Descriptive statistics was used in this study through presenting the summary of the findings in the form of bar charts, pie charts, graphs, tables and numerical measures. This made the raw data easier to understand and read. The choice of descriptive statistics depended on the research question being addressed.

### **3.9 Data Collection Quality Assurance and Ethical Considerations**

In collecting data for this research, the researcher will ensure that the data collected is of high quality and also ethical guidelines are strictly adhered to by obtaining informed consent from participants, protecting the anonymity and confidentiality of participants, avoiding deceptive practices when designing the research and also providing participants with the right to withdraw from the study research at any time.

### **3.10 Limitations of the Study**

The main limitations of the study were that of time, money, and bureaucracy. Unwillingness of some of the respondents to answer some of the questions also served as a limitation. The distribution and filling of the questionnaires occurred during working hours and this delayed the period of data retrieval from the respondents. This notwithstanding, all efforts were made to ensure the internal validity of the research.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter is focused on analyzing and interpreting the data collected from the respondents.

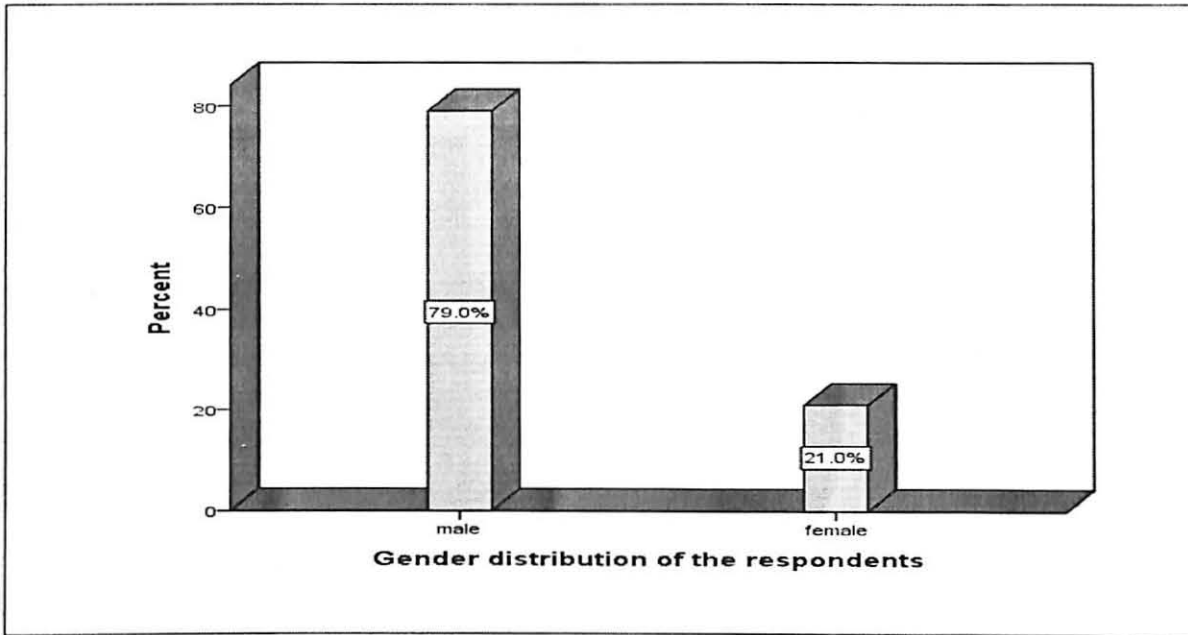
#### **4.2 Demographic Information of the Respondents**

This section of the study is focused on the background of the respondents in terms of their gender, age, academic qualifications; the nature of business etc.

##### **4.2.1 Gender distribution of the respondents**

It was found as illustrated in Figure 4.1 that out of the two hundred respondents, about 79.0% were males while 29.0% were females. This finding implies that more males participated in the study than females. Again, this finding is consistent with what authors (e.g. Venkatesh and Morris, 2000 and Mattila et al. 2003) found that men generally are more inclined to adopt and indeed use technological innovations than females. This finding therefore means that men are more inclined to adopt technological innovations including social media since they are more willing to try out new things than females and therefore, firms seeking to use social media to complement their traditional marketing communications must target men with their marketing efforts to encourage more adoption and usage of social media.

**Figure 4.1 Gender distributions of the respondents**

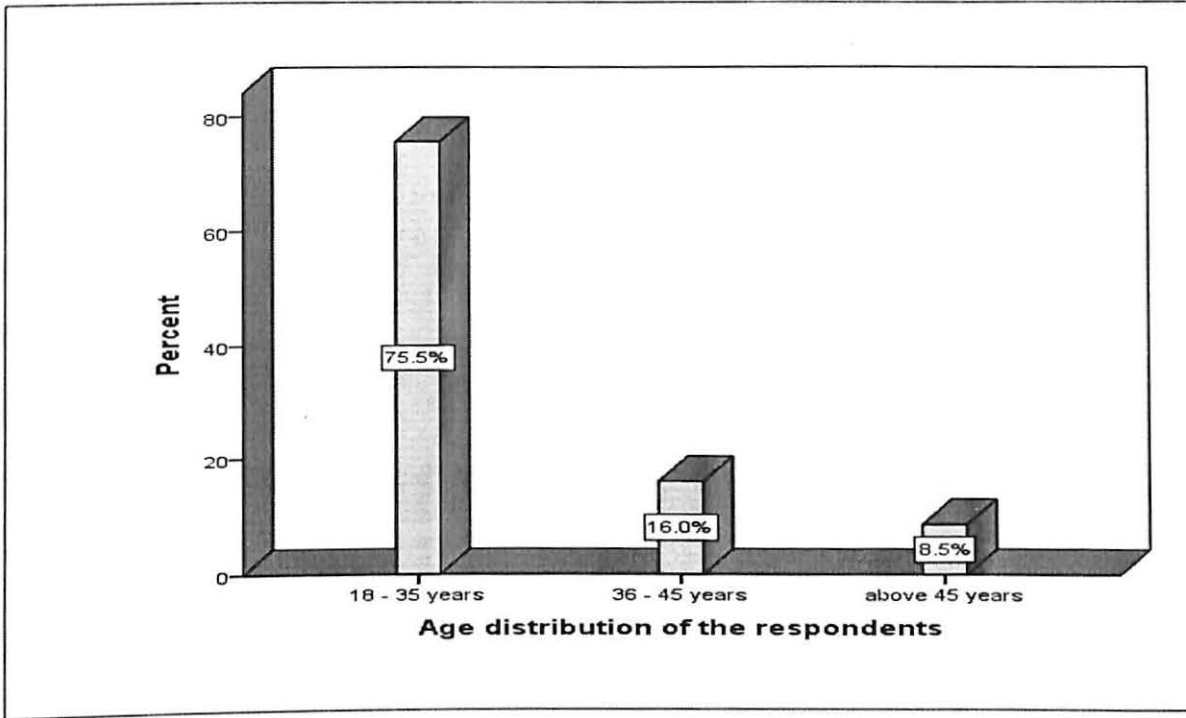


Source: Field Data (2015)

#### **4.2.2 Age distribution of the respondents**

It was also found as depicted in Figure 4.2 that 75.5% of the respondents were between ages 18 – 35; 16.0% of the respondents were between ages 36 – 45 while 8.5% were above 45 years. This finding implies that most of the respondents were below thirty five years and therefore meaning that a substantial percentage of the respondents were youthful and therefore more disposed to adopting and using social media. As observed by Karjaluoto (2002), the younger the consumer the more comfortable they are adopting and actually using social media and other technological innovations than older consumers. This finding therefore implies that firms including Guinness Ghana Brewery should target the youth more when using social media since they are the ones who use the social media applications a lot compared to older consumers.

**Figure 4.2 Age distribution of the respondents**

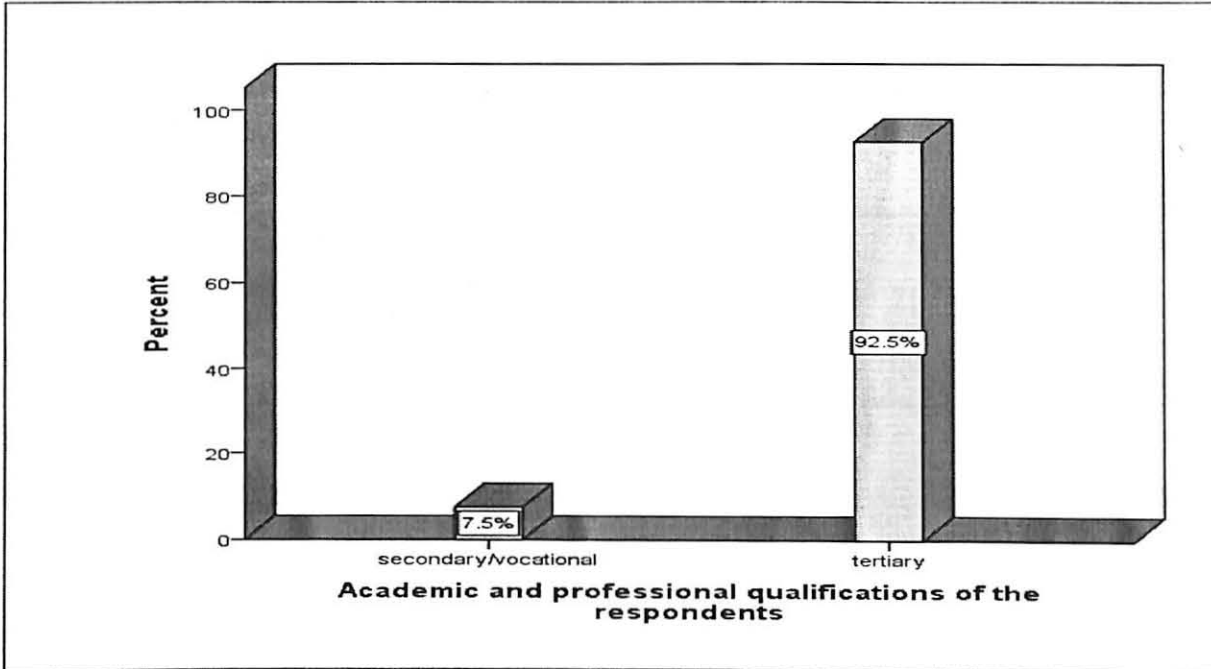


**Source: Field Data (2015)**

### **4.2.3 Academic 94**

It was moreover found that about 92.5% had tertiary education while the remaining 7.5% had secondary/vocational education. This finding implies that most of the respondents were highly educated and therefore, were capable of understanding the subject matter of the study as well as providing valid answers to the questions raised. Again, this finding is not surprising since Karjaluoto et al. (2002) have found that a typical user of technological innovation including social media is a highly educated, relatively young and wealthy person with good knowledge of computers and, especially, the Internet. See Figure 4.3 for details.

**Figure 4.3 Academic and professional qualifications of the respondents**



Source: Field Data (2015)

#### **4.2.4 Employment status**

It was further found that about 78.5% were employed while about 21.5% were unemployed. This finding implies that most of the respondents were gainfully employed and could therefore afford to access social media applications such as Facebook, Whatsapp, Twitter and Youtube which can be costly in terms of bandwidth cost and the high cost of Smartphones and other ICT related gadgets. This finding is also interesting because as pointed out by Karjaluoto (2002), the wealthy in society are more inclined towards adopting technological innovations than the unemployed and poor people. This finding further confirms Sathye's (1999) findings to the effect that consumer resources also influence the adoption of technological innovations. See table 4.1 for clarification.

**Table 4.1 Employment status**

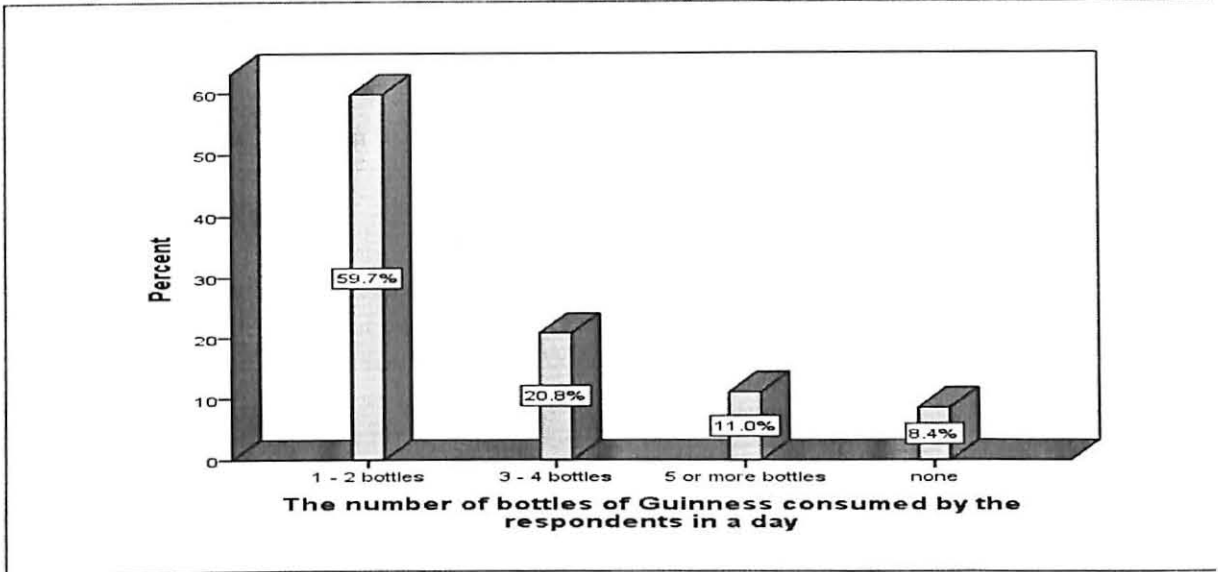
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Employed	157	78.5	78.5	78.5
Unemployed	43	21.5	21.5	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

**Source: Field Data (2015)**

#### **4.2.5 The number of bottles of Guinness consumed by the respondents in a day**

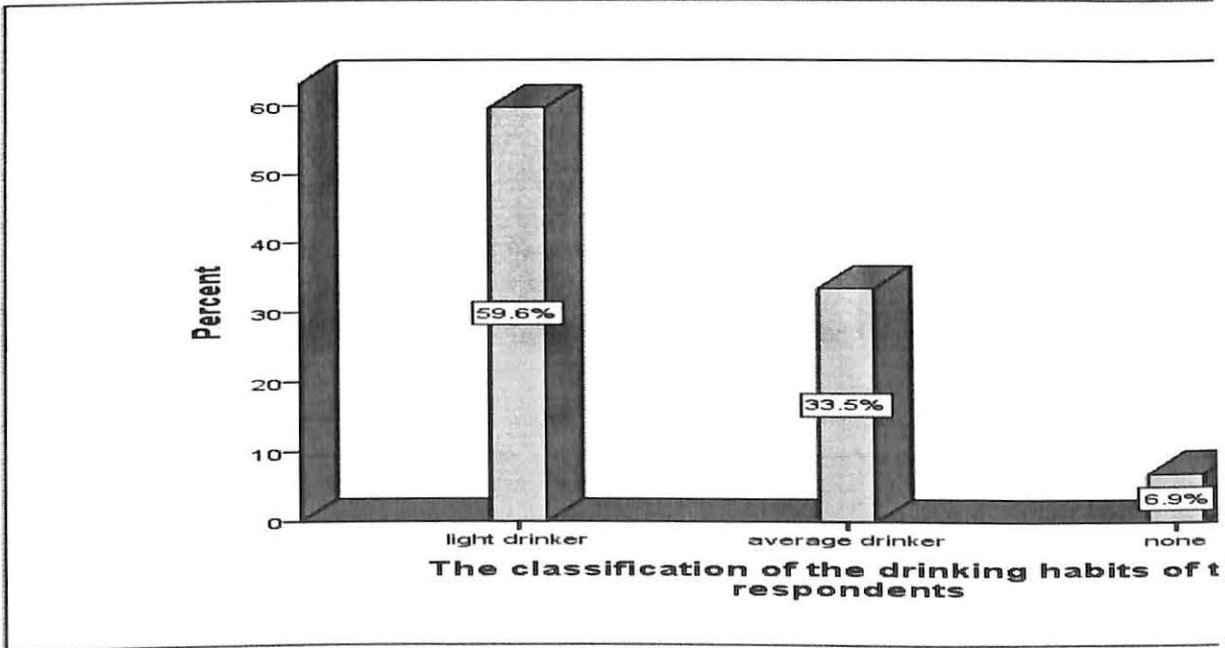
This study also found as depicted in Figure 4.4 that about 59.7% of the respondents on the average consume about 1 – 2 bottles of Guinness per day; 20.8% consumed between 3 – 4 bottles per day while 8.5% consumed about 5 or more bottles per day. About 6.5% do not drink at all. There were forty-six non-responses. Therefore the response rate for the question was 77.0%. It was in the same vein found as illustrated in Figure 4.5 that about 59.6% indicate that they were light drinkers; 33.5% were average drinkers while 6.9% do not drink at all. There were twelve none responses. Therefore, the response rate for the question was 94.0%. These findings imply that most of the respondents were light drinkers and also suggest that they respondents know much about the alcoholic beverages of the manufacturer.

**Figure 4.4** The number of bottles of Guinness consumed by the respondents in a day



Source: Field Data (2015)

**Figure 4.5** The classification of the drinking habits of the respondents



Source: Field Data (2015)

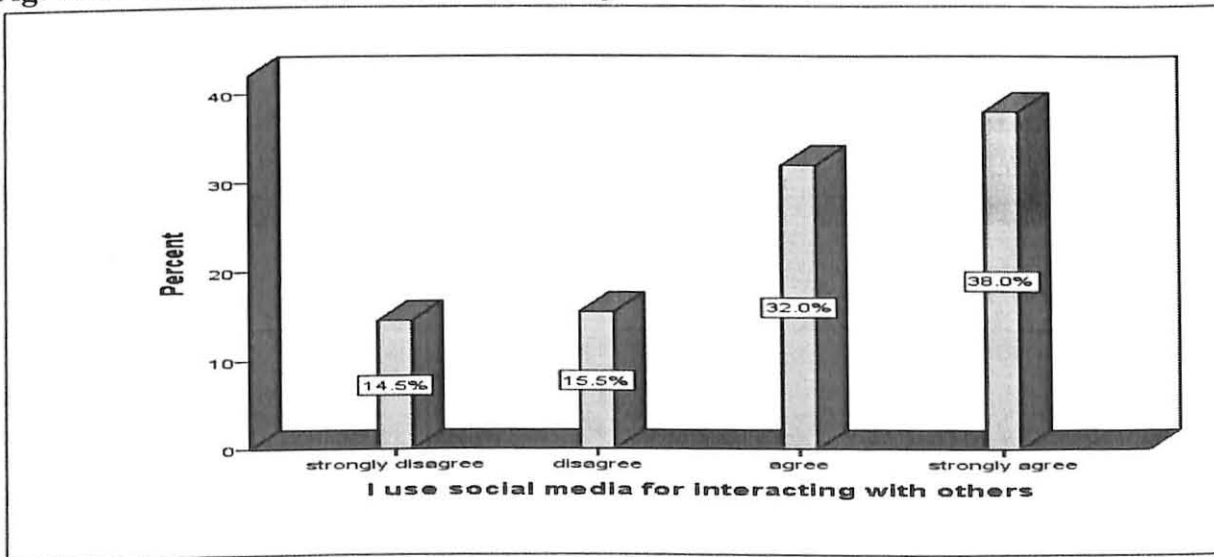
### 4.3 Customers Perceptions about Social Media

This section of the study presented the findings in relation to the first objective of determining the perceptions of the consumers towards social media.

#### 4.3.1 The Reasons for Using Social Media

It was found that there are several reasons why the respondents use social media. The main reasons were found to be interacting with people (friends, family and other consumers); others use it because it is easy to operate; to view online advertisement and to seek opinion about product/services. For instance and as can be seen in Figure 4.6, about 32.0% and 38.0% respondents agreed and strongly agreed respectively that they use social media for interacting with others while 15.5% and 14.5% disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively.

**Figure 4.6 I use social media for interacting with others**

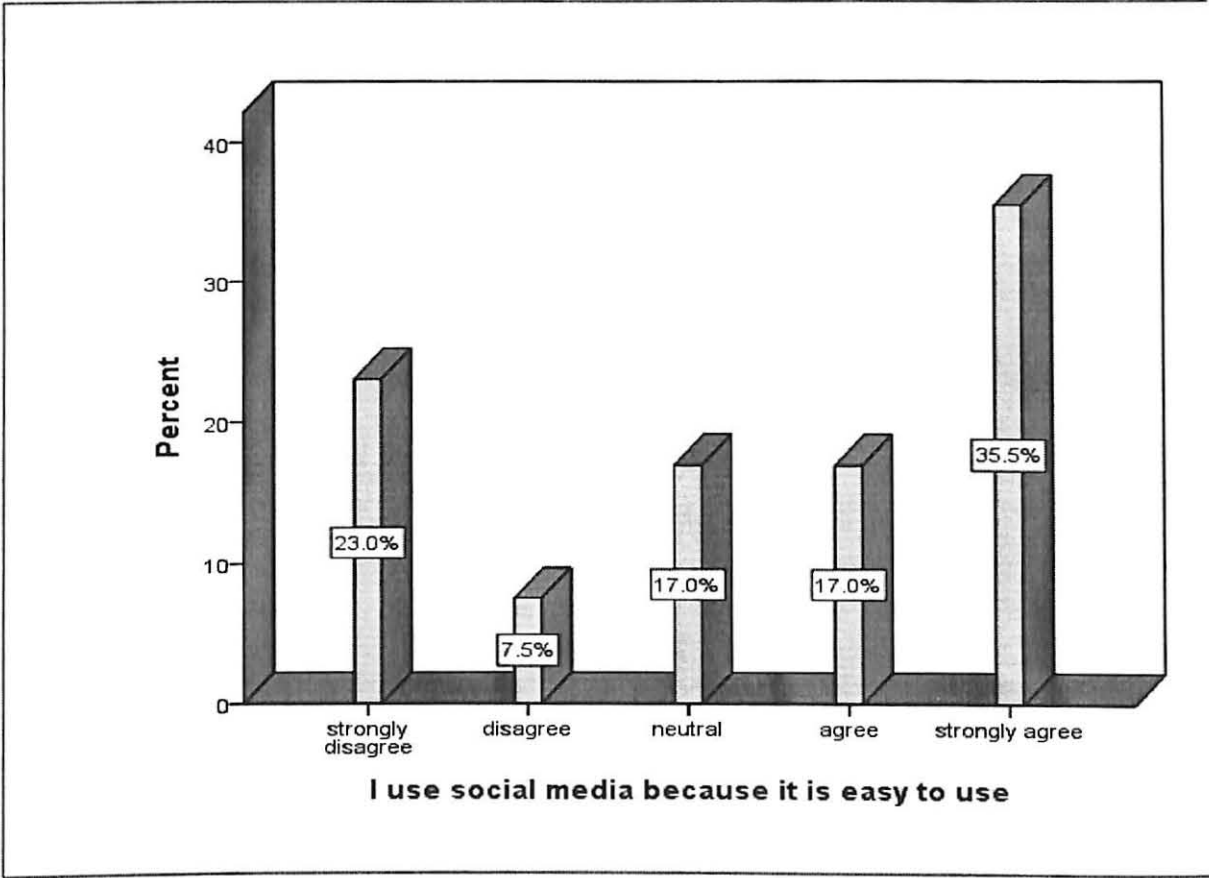


Source: Field Data (2015)

It was also found as shown in Figure 4.7 that about 17.0% and 35.5% of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed respectively that they use social media because it is easy to use while 7.5% and 23.0%) disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively. About 17.0% were neutral. This finding implies that most of the respondents adopted social media because using it is not difficult. This finding actually resonates with what researchers such as Flavian and Guinaliu (2006) and Gerrard and Cunningham (2003) found to the effect that when a technological innovation is perceived as easier to use, it leads to more system use and more likely to be adopted by users.

In fact this finding corroborates what Flavian and Guinaliu (2006) found that Perceived Ease Of Use (PEOU) of a technological innovation increases users' level of trust because greater usability decreases the probability of errors. Again, customer interactivity has been associated with PEOU and that the more technological innovations are able to meet users' needs, the more they are perceived as easier to use and by so doing, leading to higher acceptance. In effect, this finding underscores the need for firms who use social media to interact with their customers to make their services easier- to- use and navigate through since faster response time, content and design lead to PEOU and consequently influence users' perception of social media applications.

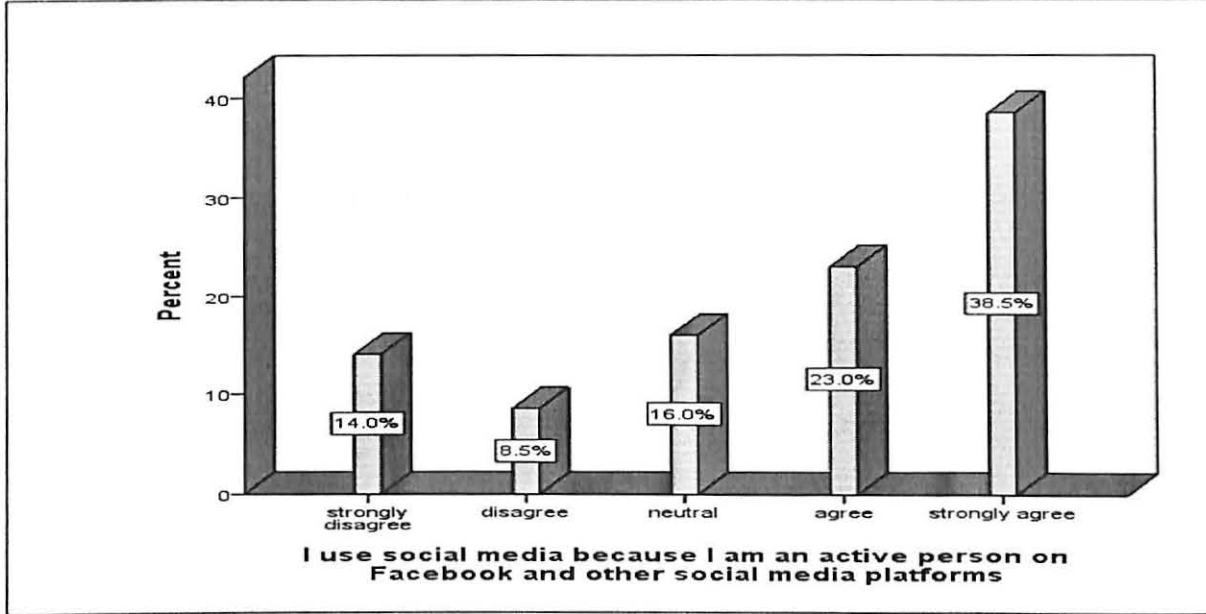
**Figure 4.7 I use social media because it is easy to use**



**Source: Field Data (2015)**

It was again found that about 23.0% and 38.5% of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed respectively that they use social media because they are active on Facebook and other social media platforms while about 8.5% and 14.0% disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively. See figure 4.8 for details.

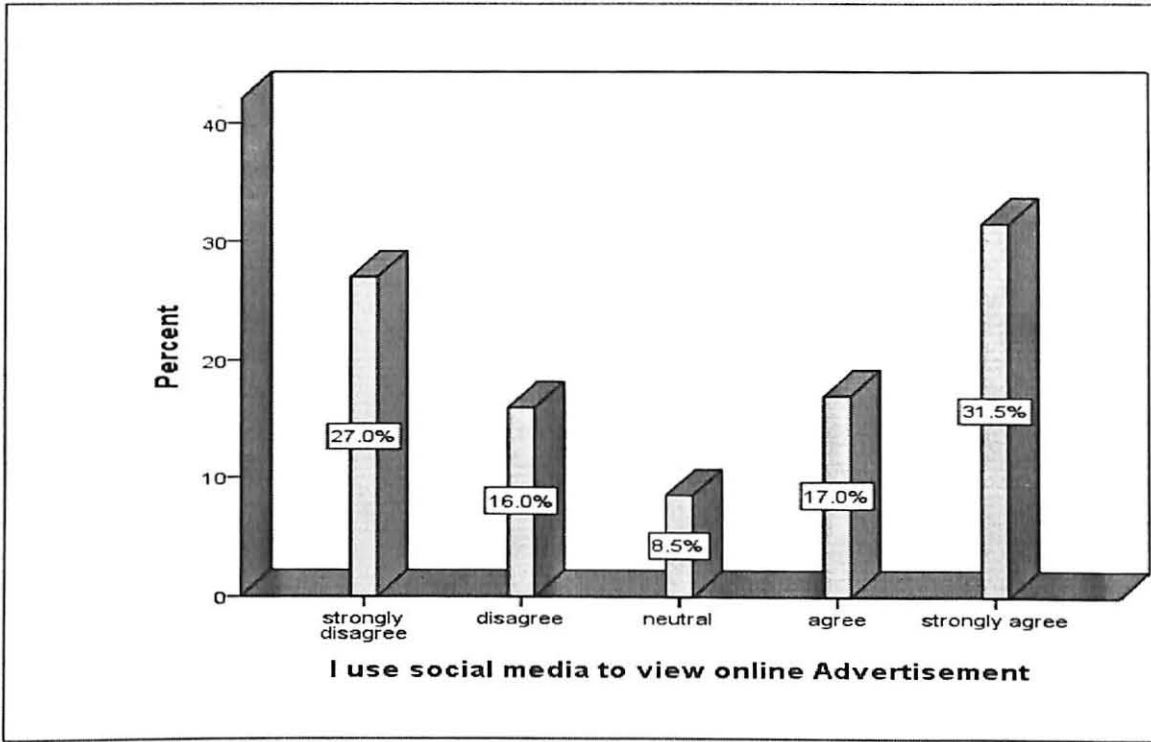
**Figure 4.8 I use social media because I am an active person on Facebook and other social media platforms**



**Source: Field Data (2015)**

It was further found that about 17.0% and 31.5% of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed respectively that they use social media to view online advertisement while 16.0% and 27.0% disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively. About 8.5% were neutral. This finding implies that the respondents regard social media as a platform through which they can have access to adverts and information of products or services they need in order to facilitate their decision- making.

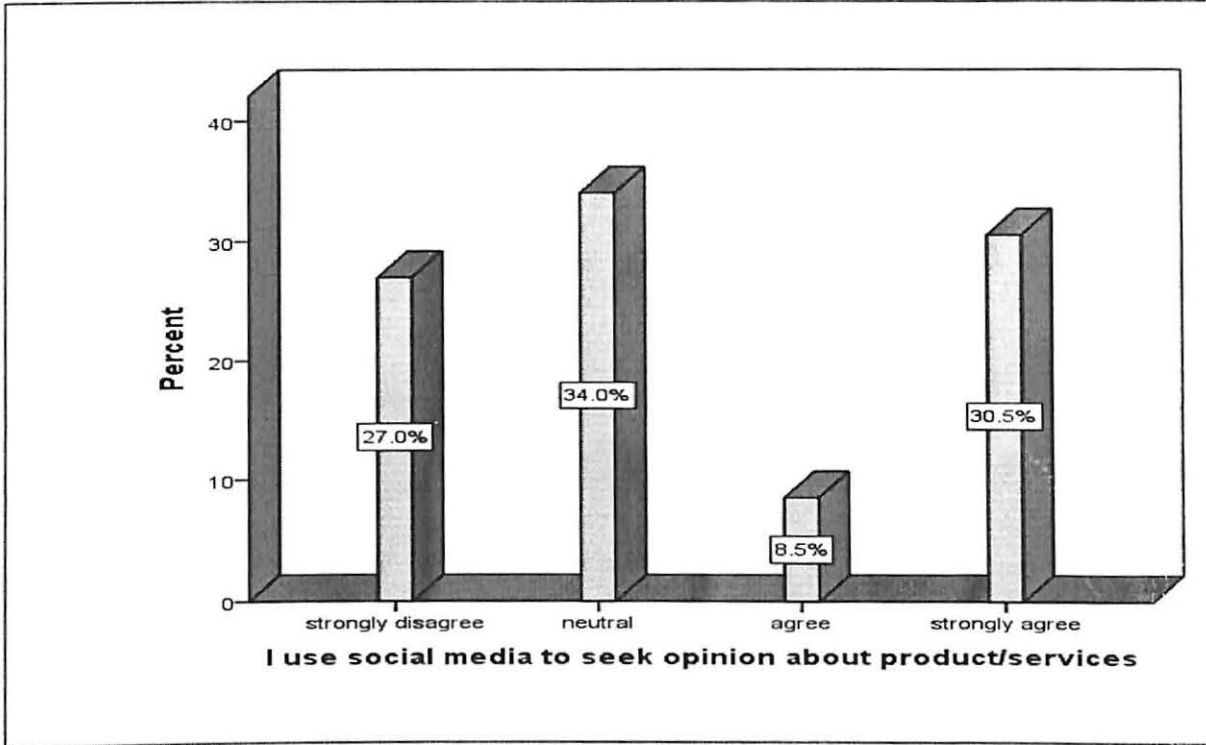
**Figure 4.9 I use social media to view online Advertisement**



Source: Field Data (2015)

It was additionally found that about 8.5% and 30.5% of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed respectively that they use social media to seek opinion about product/services while 27.0% strongly disagreed. About 34.0% respondents were neutral. This finding implies that recommendations by friends or other consumers on social media help consumers in their decision-making. As pointed out by Solomon et al. (2010), these recommendations could help brand attitudes, purchasing attitudes, and advertising attitudes. This means that the more good responses on the products or services, the more attractive that particular product or serviced becomes to consumers since this opinion or recommendations com from trusted people.

**Figure 4.10 I use social media to seek opinion about product/services**

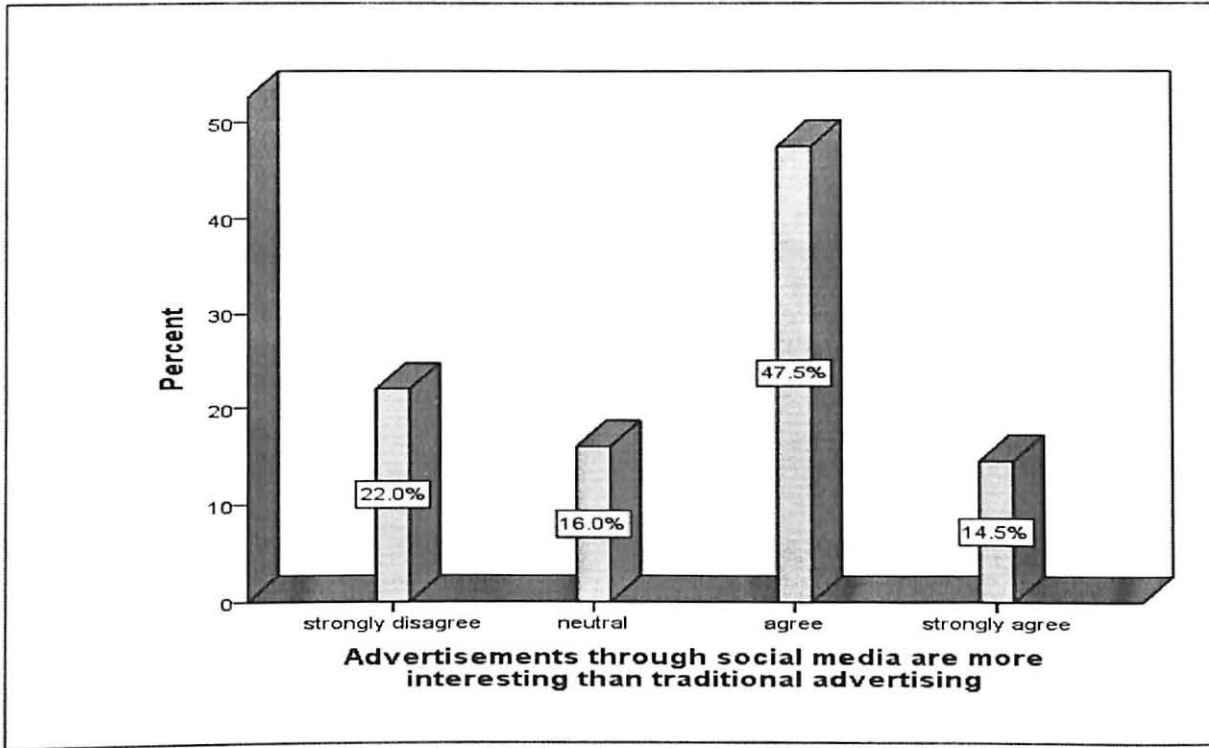


Source: Field Data (2015)

### 4.3.2 Perceptions about Social Media

This study found that overall; the respondents have positive perceptions about social media. It was found that most of the respondents find adverts through social media as more interesting and more interactive; that companies which use social media for marketing purposes are more innovative than those that do not use it. As can be seen in Figure 4.11 for instance, about 47.5% and 14.5% of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed respectively that advertisements through social media are more interesting than traditional advertising while about 22.0% strongly disagreed. About 16.0% were neutral.

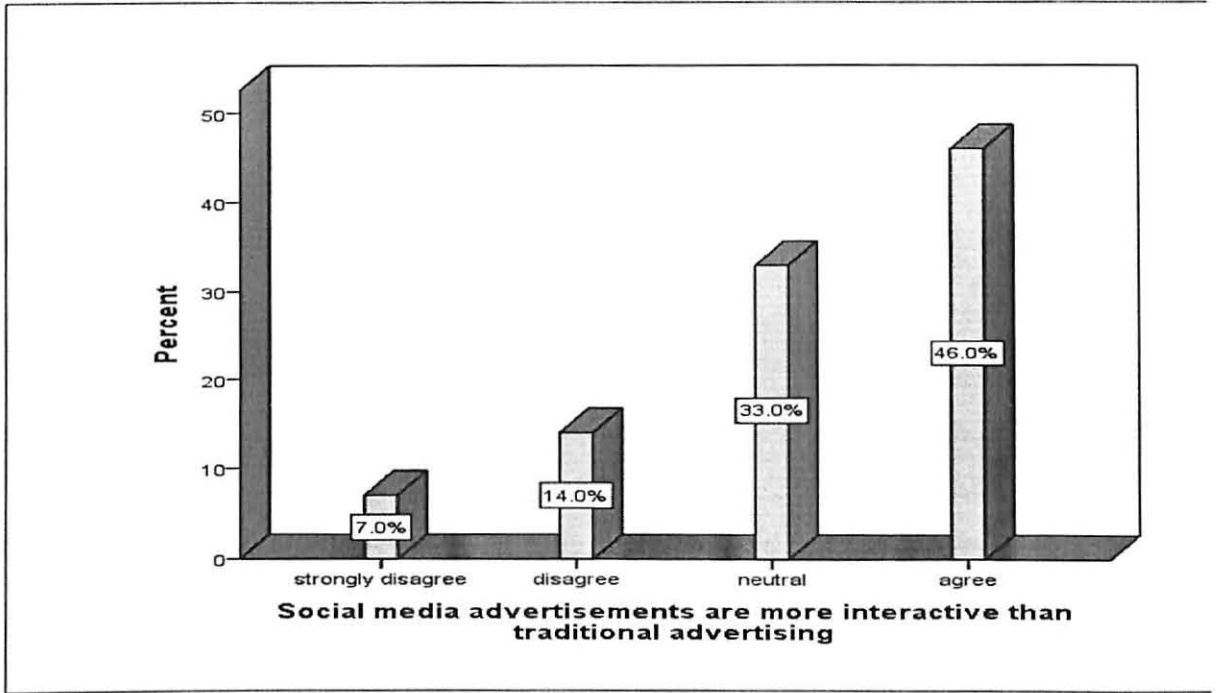
**Figure 4.11 Advertisements through social media are more interesting than traditional advertising**



Source: Field Data (2015)

It was also found that about 46.0% agreed that of the respondents Social media advertisements are more interactive than traditional advertising while about 14.0% and 7.0% disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively. About 33.0% were neutral. See Figure 4.12 for details. This finding implies that firms such as Guinness must make their adverts more interactive and engaging since this tends to attract the attention of users. This finding actually supports what Yogesh and Yesha (2014) and Ioană and Stoica (2014) found to the effect that as opposed to traditional media, social media allows readers/viewers/listeners to participate in the creation or development of the content of adverts and this tends to make adverts on social media more acceptable by users.

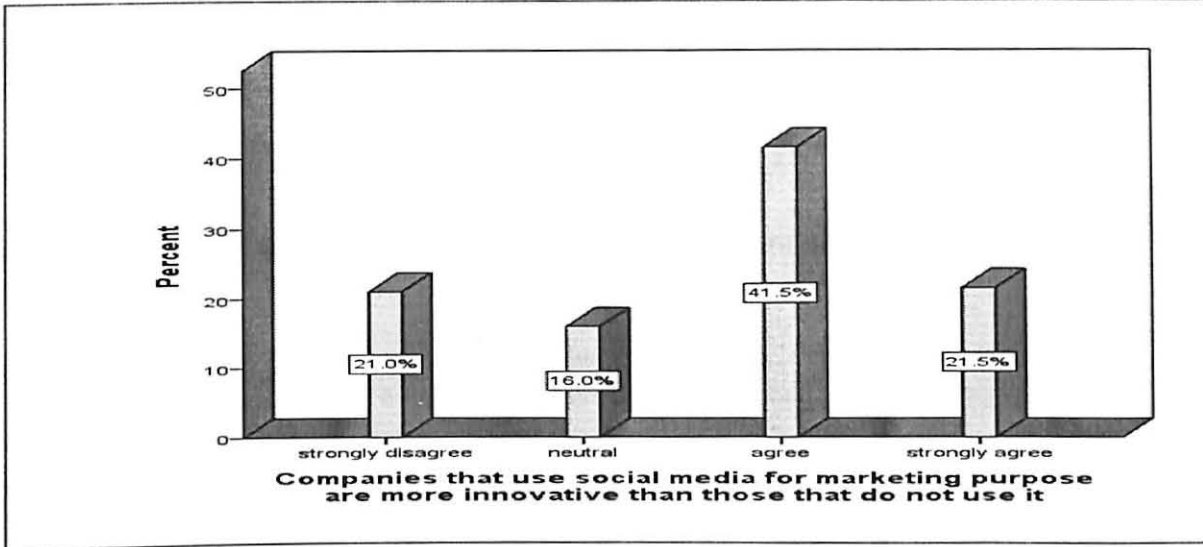
**Figure 4.12 Social media advertisements are more interactive than traditional advertising**



**Source: Field Data (2015)**

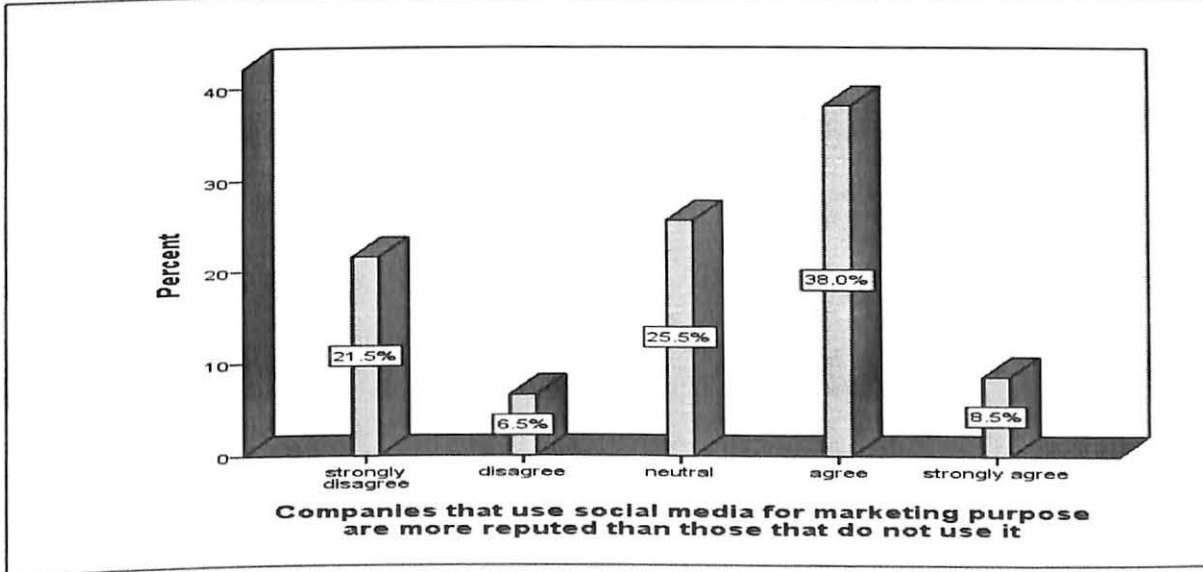
It was again found as depicted in Figure 4.13 that about 41.5% and 21.5% of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed respectively that companies that use social media for marketing purposes are more innovative than those that do not use it while 21.0% strongly disagreed. About 16.0% were neutral. It was similarly found as shown in Figure 4.14 that about 38.0% and 8.5% of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed respectively that companies that use social media for marketing purpose are more recognized and respected than those that do not use it while 6.5% and 21.5% disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively. About 25.3% were neutral.

**Figure 4.13 Companies that use social media for marketing purpose are more innovative than those that do not use it**



Source: Field Data (2015)

**Figure 4.14 Companies that use social media for marketing purpose are more reputed than those that do not use it**

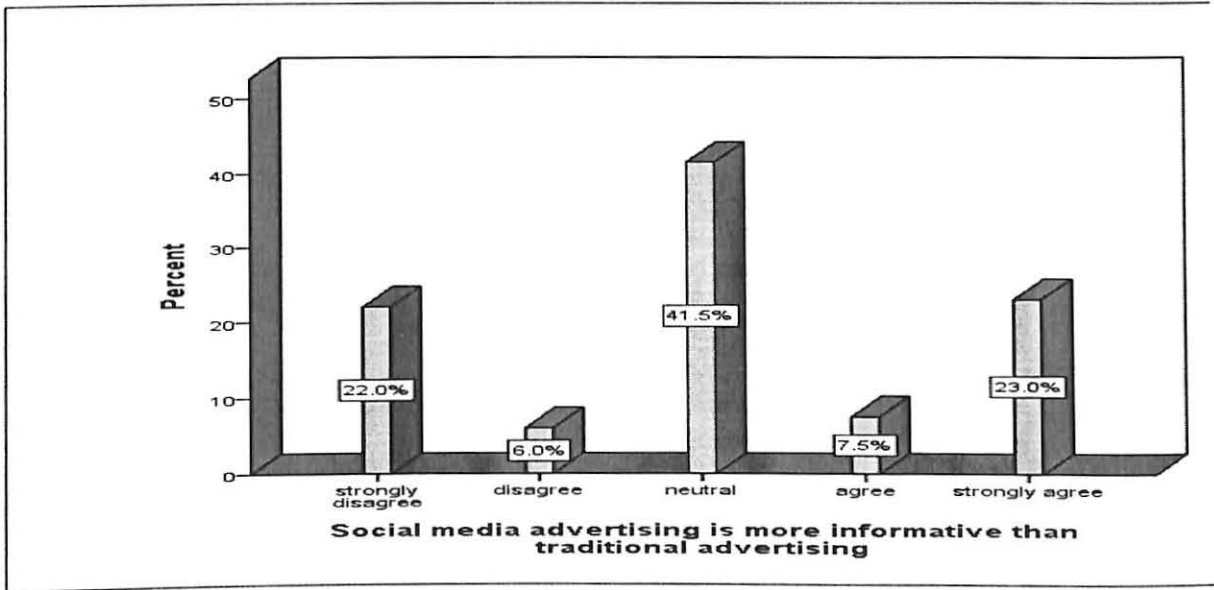


Source: Field Data (2015)

It was however found as shown in Figure 4.15 that only about 7.5% and 23.0% of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed respectively that social media advertising is more informative than traditional advertising whiles about 6.0% and

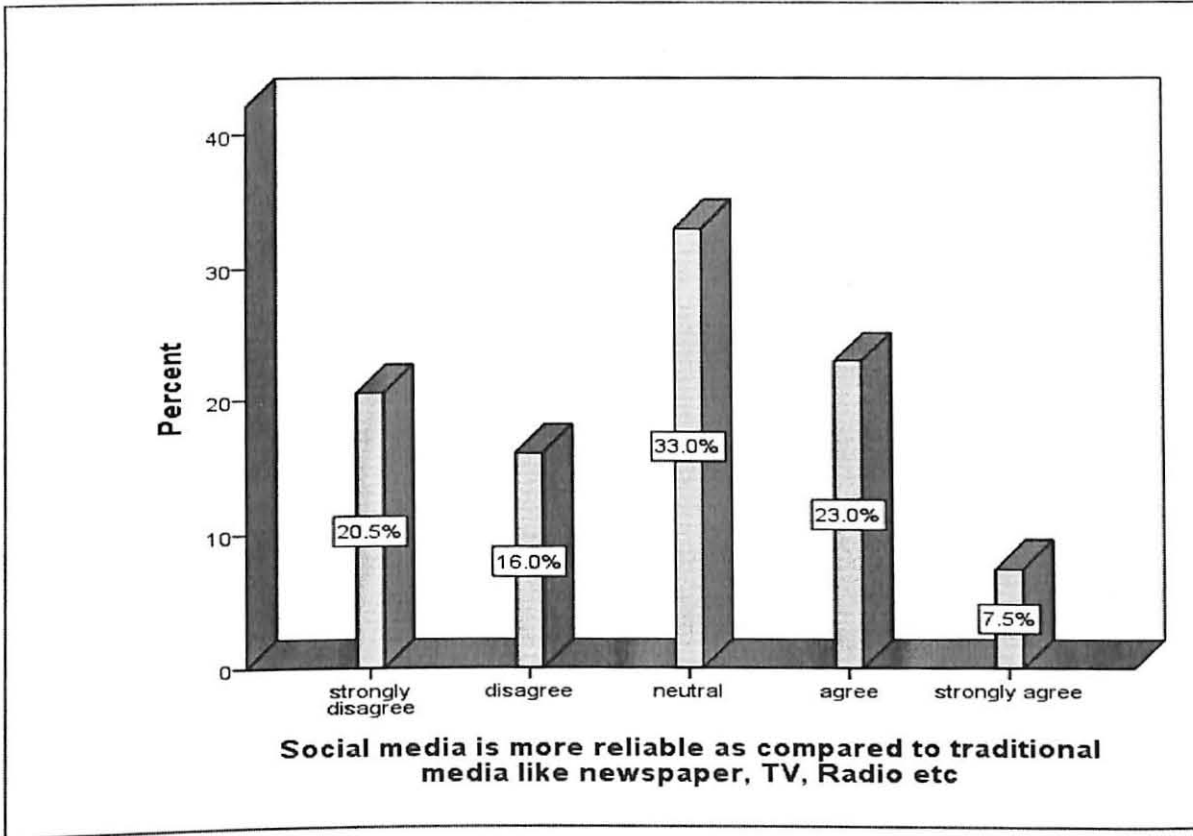
22.0% disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively. About 41.5% were neutral. It was in the same vein found that about 23.0% and 7.5% agreed and strongly agreed respectively that social media is more reliable as compared to traditional media like newspaper, TV, Radio etc while 16.0% and 20.5% disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively. About 33.0% were neutral. See figure 4.16 for clarification.

**Figure 4.15 Social media advertising is more informative than traditional advertising**



Source: Field Data (2015)

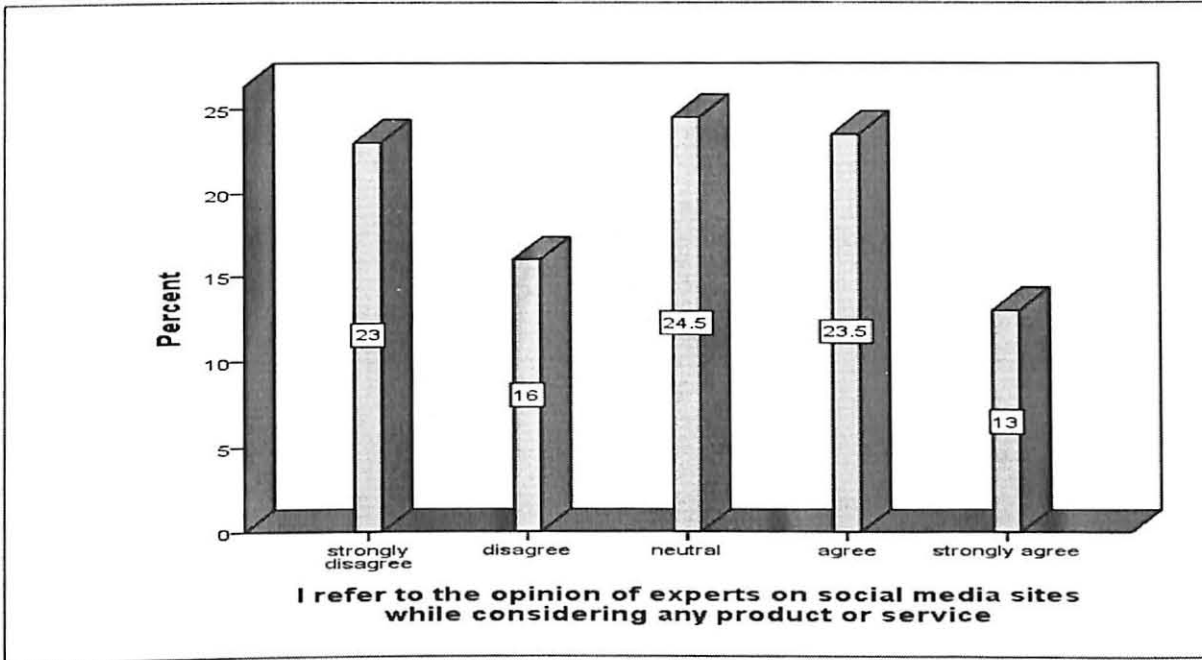
**Figure 4.16 Social media is more reliable as compared to traditional media like newspaper, TV, Radio etc**



**Source: Field Data (2015)**

It was further found that only about 23.5% and 13.0% agreed and strongly agreed respectively that they refer to the opinion of experts on social media sites while considering any product or service whiles about 16.0%) and 13.0% disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively. About 24.5% were neutral.

**Figure 4.17 I refer to the opinion of experts on social media sites while considering any product or service**

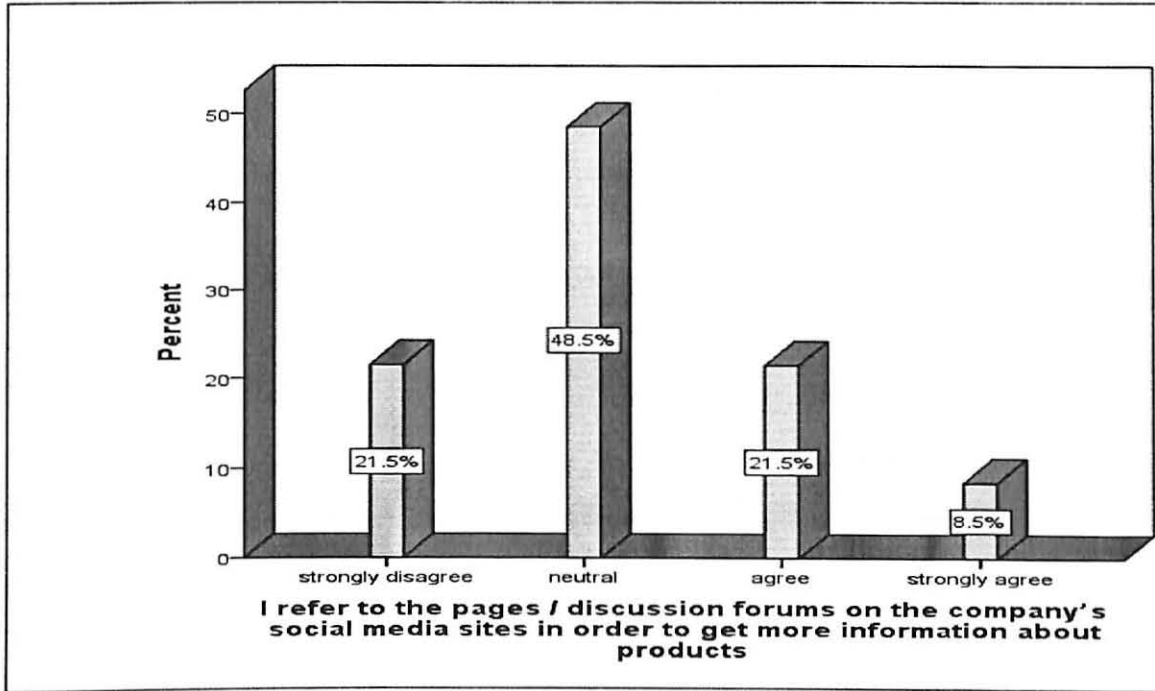


Source: Field Data (2015)

#### 4.4 The Effects Social Media Has On Customers

This section presented the findings in relation to the second objective of the study. It was found that the effect of social media on customers is *mixed* and therefore implying that Ghanaian firms must do more in terms of enriching the content of their social media platforms if they are to influence the decision making of customers. It was for instance found as shown in Figure 4.18 that only about 21.3% and 8.5% of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed respectively that they refer to the pages / discussion forums on the company’s social media sites in order to get more information about products while 21.5% strongly disagreed. About 48.5% were neutral.

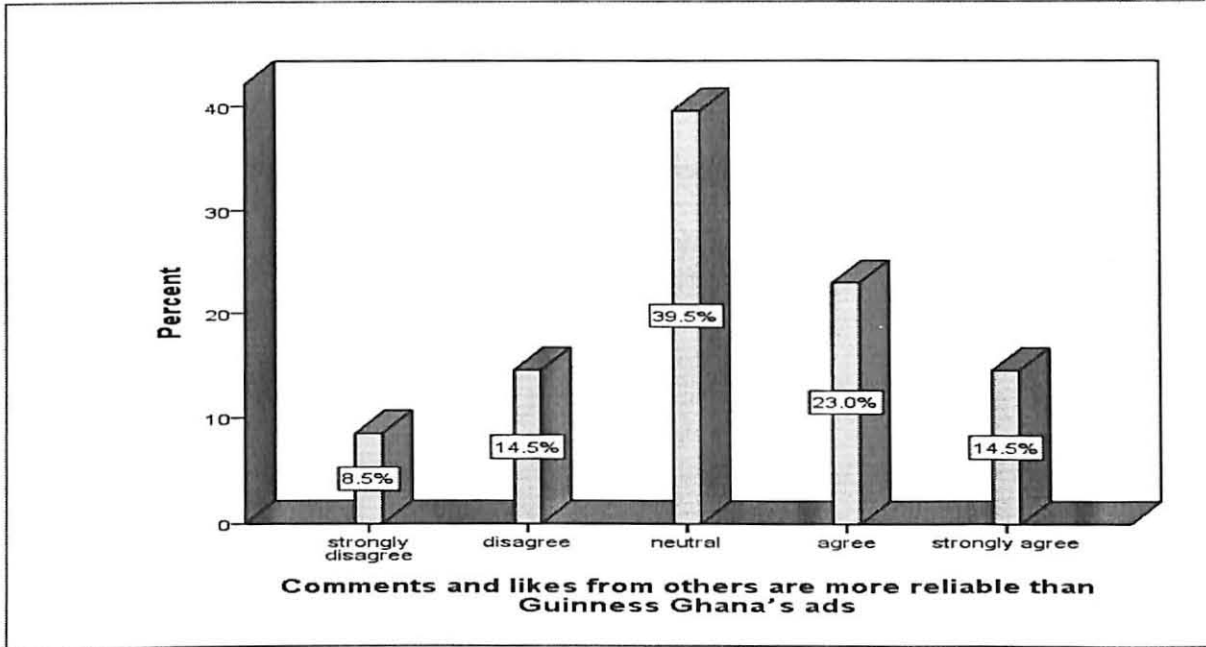
**Figure 4.18 I refer to the pages / discussion forums on the company’s social media sites in order to get more information about products**



**Source: Field Data (2015)**

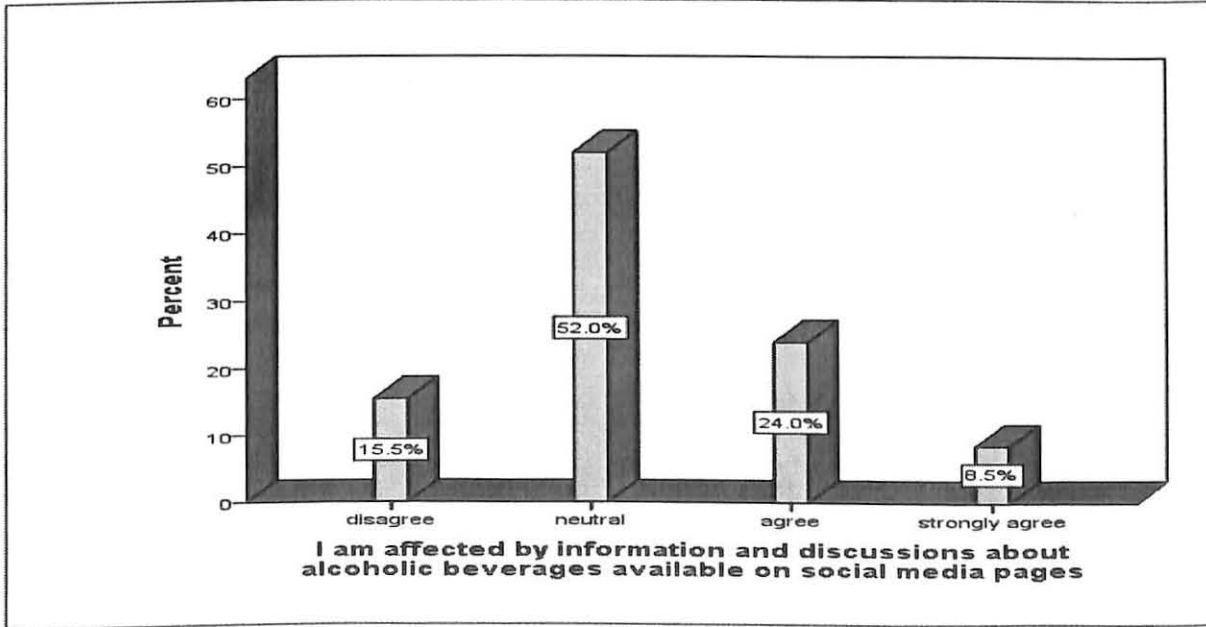
It was also found that only about 23.0% and 14.5% of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed respectively that “comments” and “likes” from others are more reliable than Guinness Ghana’s ads while 14.5% and 8.5% of the respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively. About 39.5% were neutral. See Figure 4.19 for details. It was similarly found as depicted in Figure 4.20 that about 24.0% and 8.5% of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed respectively that they are affected by information and discussions about alcoholic beverages available on social media pages while about 15.5% disagreed. About 52.0% were neutral.

**Figure 4.19 Comments and likes from others are more reliable than Guinness Ghana's ads**



Source: Field Data (2015)

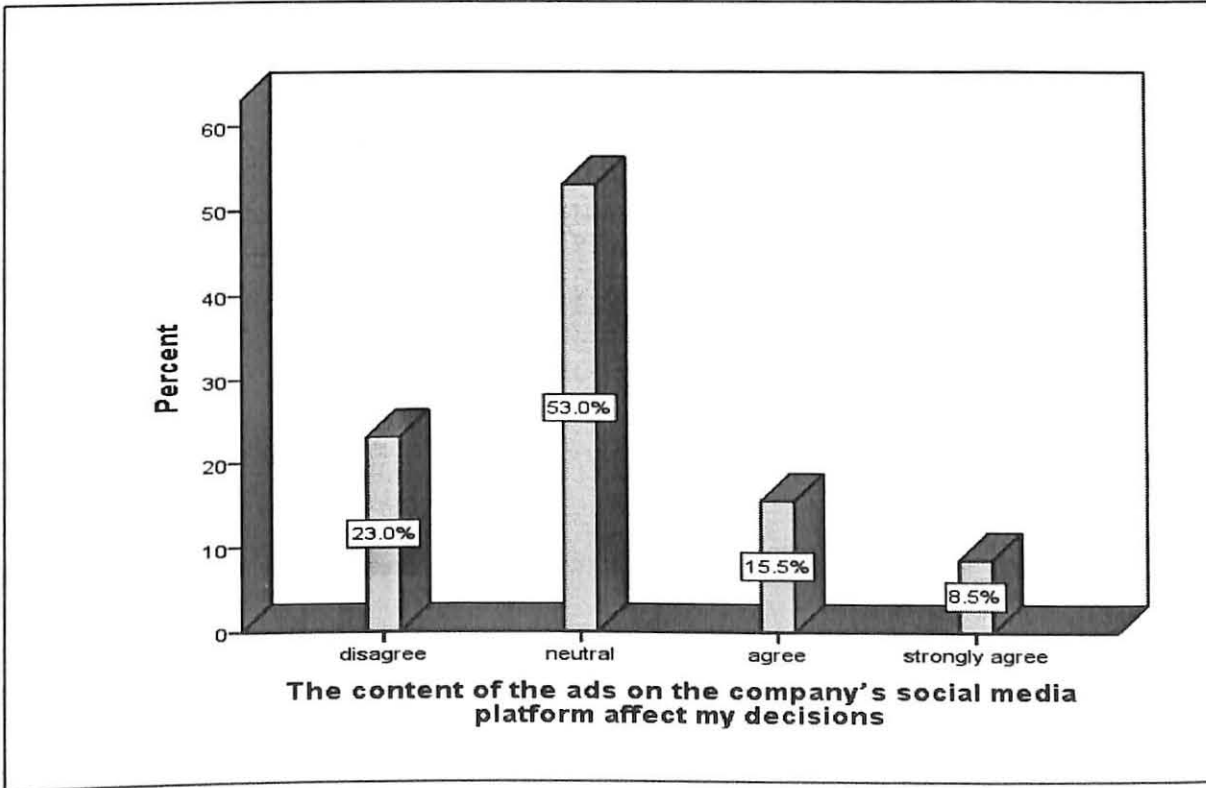
**Figure 4.20 I am affected by information and discussions about alcoholic beverages available on social media pages**



Source: Field Data (2015)

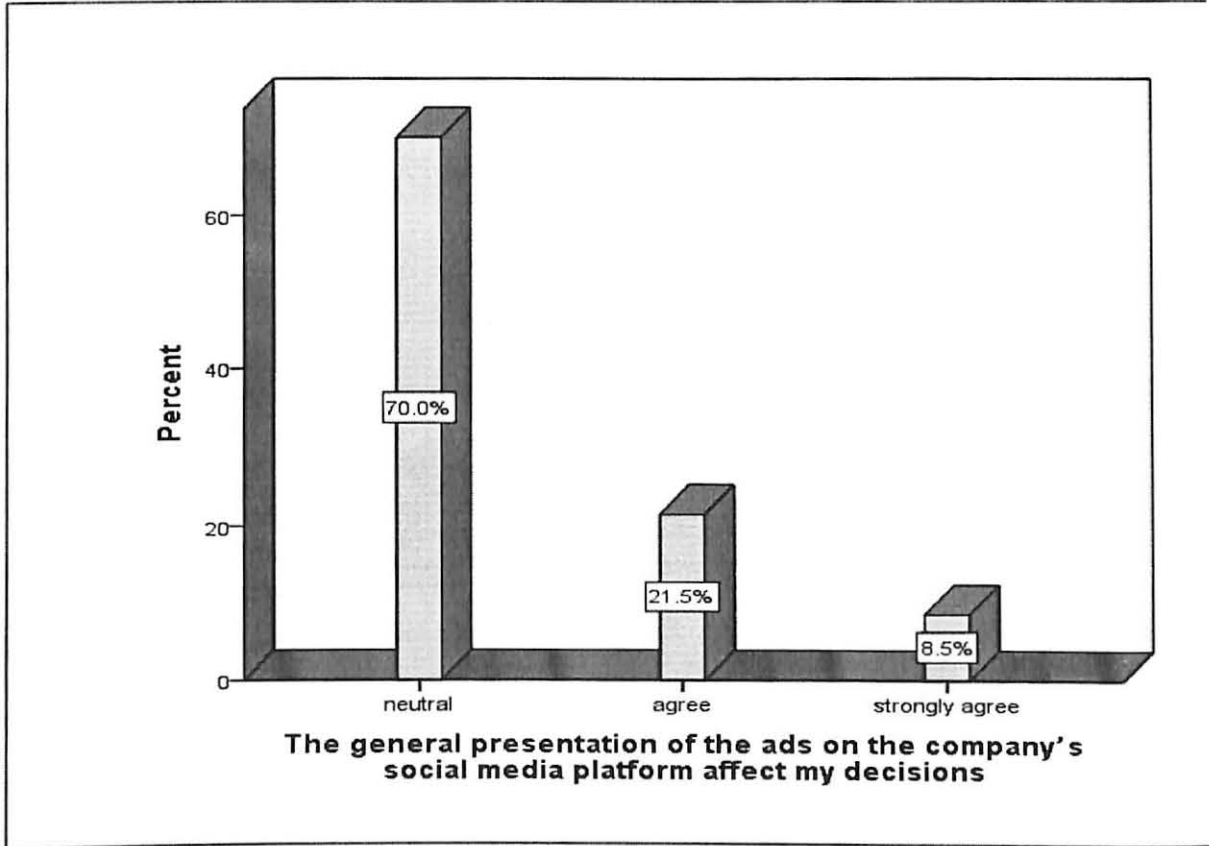
It was also found as shown in Figure 4.21 that only about 15.5% and 8.5% of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed respectively that the content of the ads on the company's social media platform affect my decisions while about 23.0% disagreed. However, as high as about 53.0% of the respondents were neutral. Likewise, only about 21.5% and 8.5% of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed respectively that the general presentation of the ads on the company's social media platform affect their decisions. About 70.0% were neutral. See Figure 4.22 for clarification.

**Figure 4.21 The content of the ads on the company's social media platform affect my decisions**



Source: Field Data (2015)

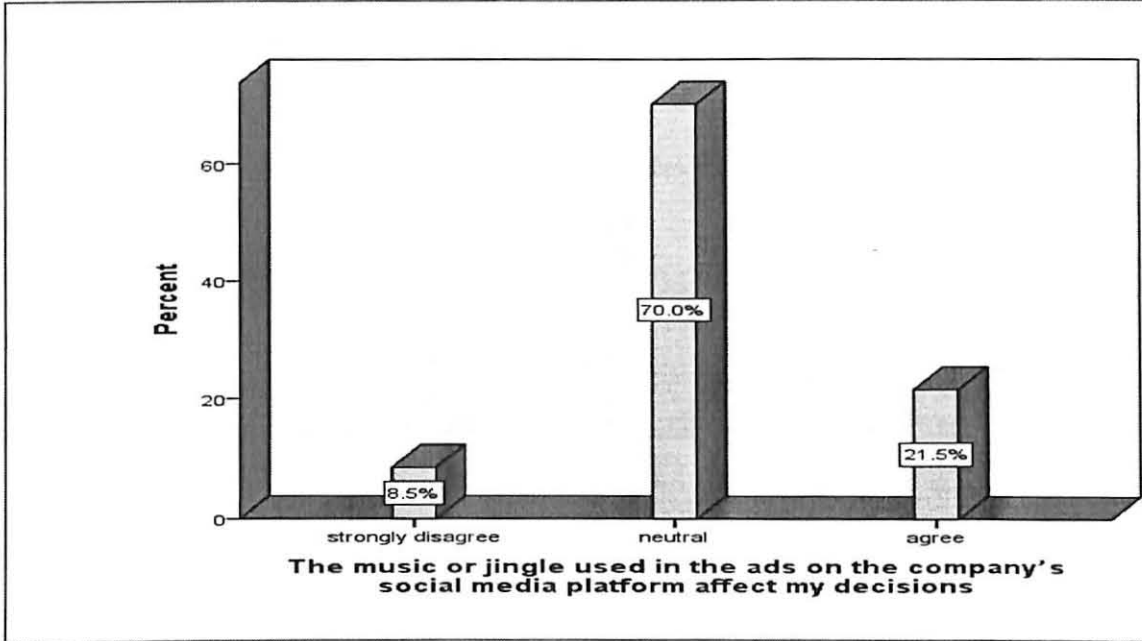
**Figure 4.22 The general presentation of the ads on the company's social media platform affect my decisions**



**Source: Field Data (2015)**

It was moreover found that only about 21.5% agreed that the music or jingle used in the ads on the company's social media platform affect their decisions while 8.5% strongly disagreed. However, about 70.0% of the respondents were neutral. See figure for 4.23 for details.

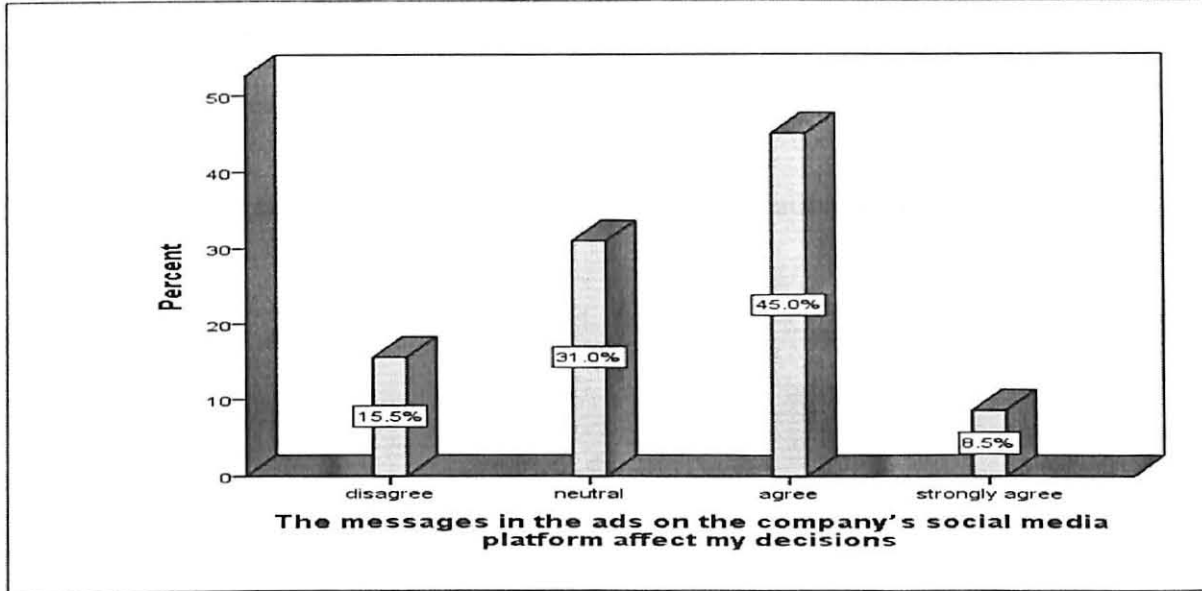
**Figure 4.23 The music or jingle used in the ads on the company's social media platform affect my decisions**



**Source: Field Data (2015)**

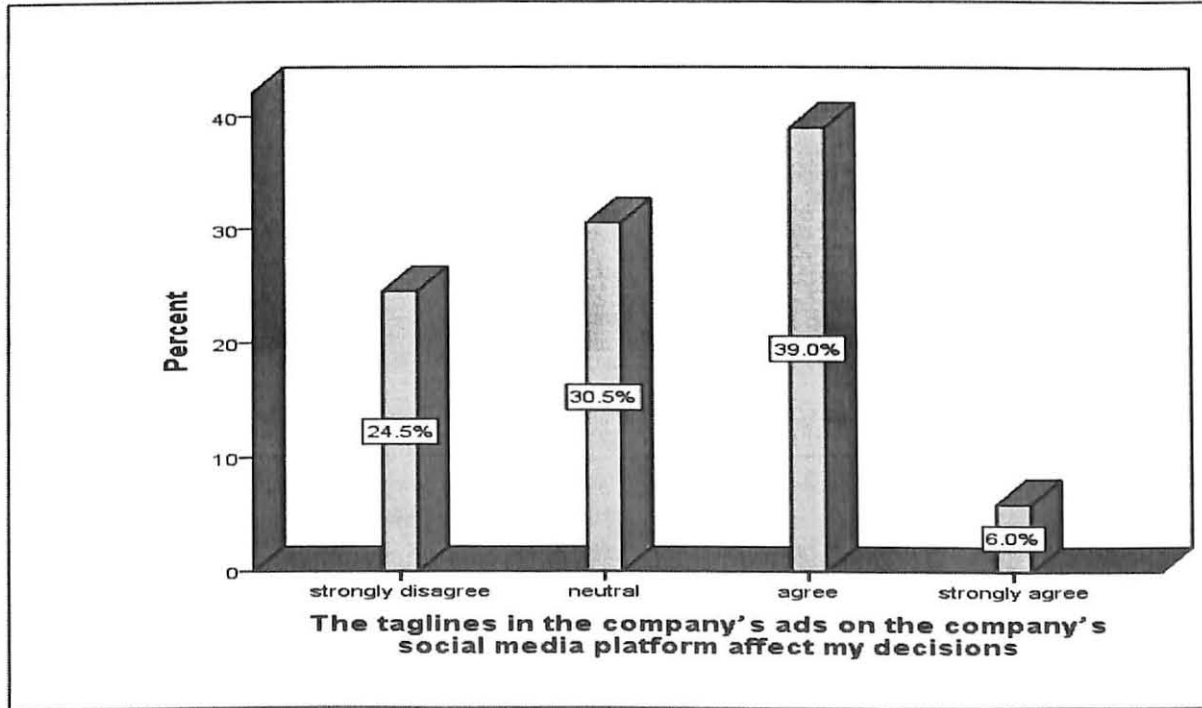
It was however found that and as illustrated in Figure 4.24, only about 45.0% and 8.5% agreed and strongly agreed respectively that the messages in the ads on the company's social media platform affect their decisions while about 15.5% disagreed. About 31.0%) were neutral. It was similarly found that about 39.0% and 6.0% of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed respectively that the taglines in the company's ads on the company's social media platform affect their decisions while about 24.5% strongly disagreed. About 61.0% were neutral. See figure 4.25 for clarification.

**Figure 4.24** The messages in the ads on the company's social media platform affect my decisions



Source: Field Data (2015)

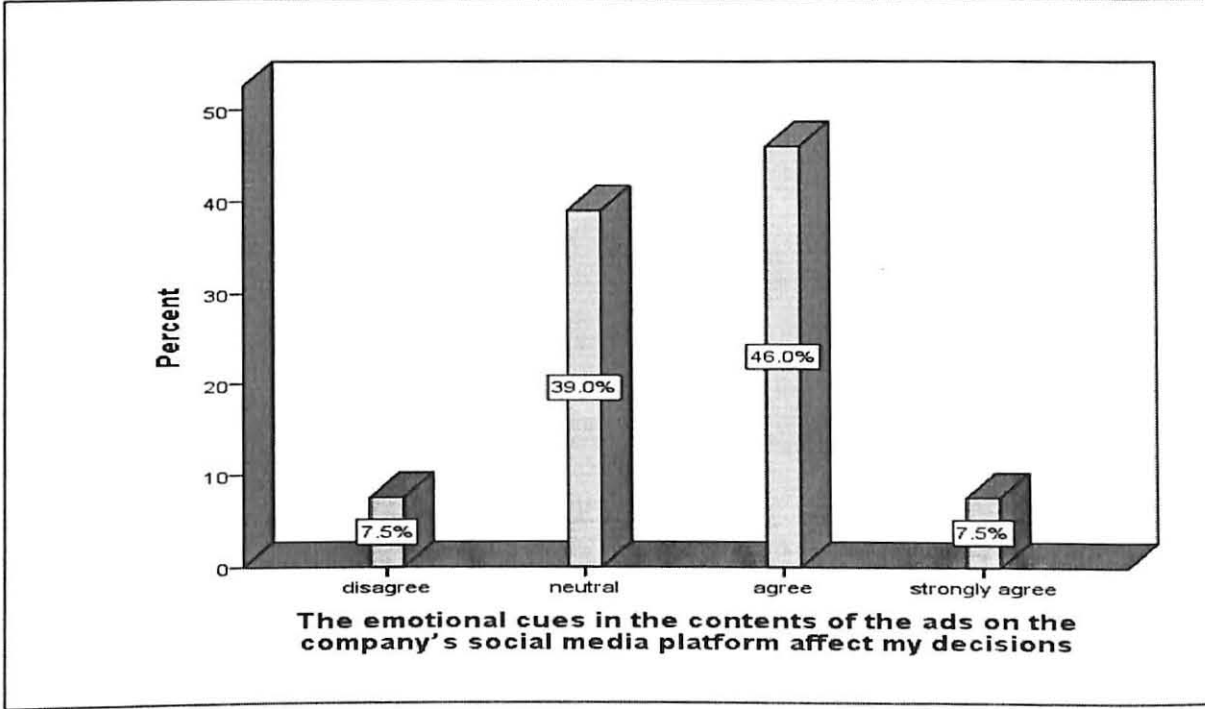
**Figure 4.23** The taglines in the company's ads on the company's social media platform affect my decisions



Source: Field Data (2015)

It was in the same vein found as shown in Figure 4.24 that about 46.0% and 7.5% of the respondents agree and strongly agreed respectively that the emotional cues in the contents of the ads on the company’s social media platform affect their decisions while 7.5% disagreed. About 39.0% were neutral.

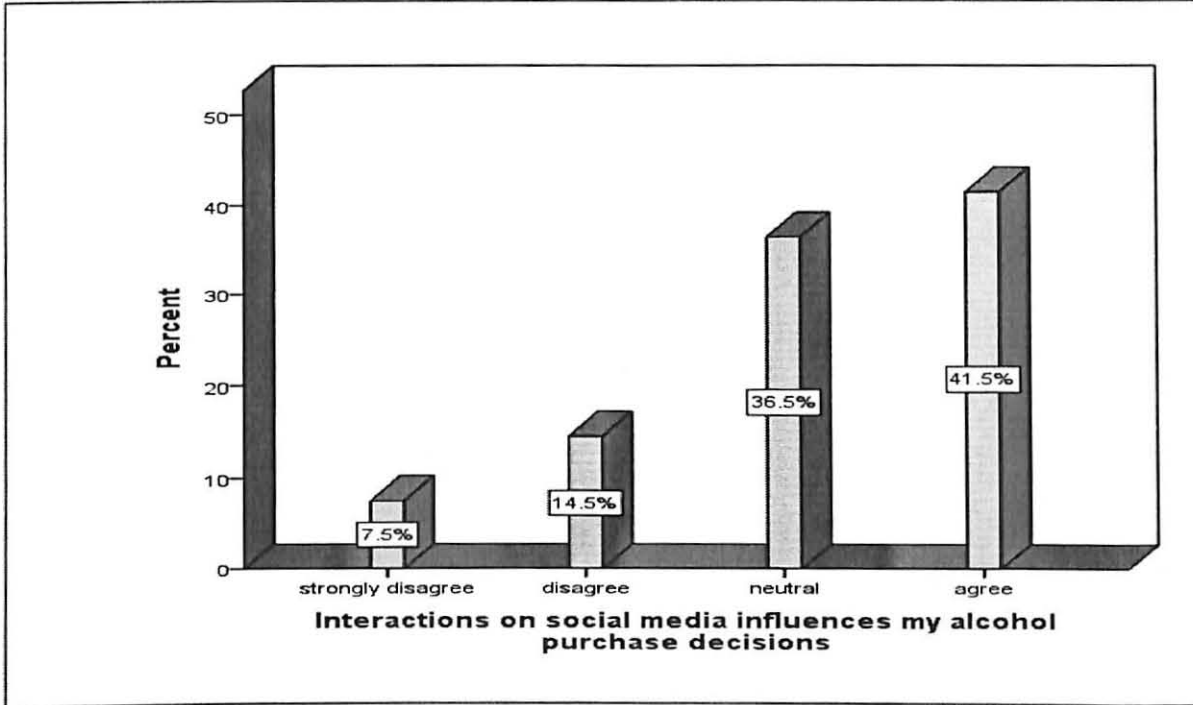
**Figure 4.24 The emotional cues in the contents of the ads on the company’s social media platform affect my decisions**



Source: Field Data (2015)

It was moreover found that about 41.5% of the respondents agreed that interactions on social media influences their alcohol purchase decisions while about 14.5% and 7.5% disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively. About 36.5% were neutral. See figure 4.25 for confirmation.

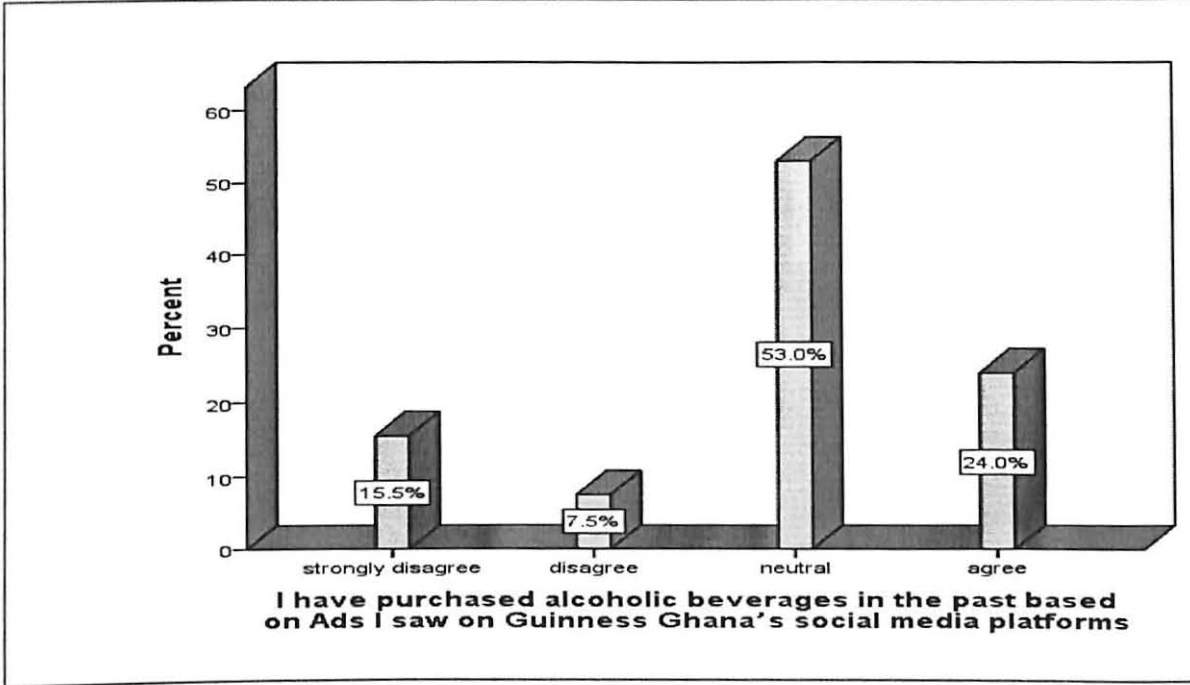
**Figure 4.25 Interactions on social media influences my alcohol purchase decisions**



**Source: Field Data (2015)**

It was further found as depicted in Figure 4.26 that about 53.0% and 24.0% of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed respectively that they have purchased alcoholic beverages in the past based on Ads they saw on Guinness Ghana’s social media platforms whiles 7.5% and 15.5% disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively. About 53.0% were neutral.

**Figure 4.26 I have purchased alcoholic beverages in the past based on Ads I saw on Guinness Ghana’s social media platforms**



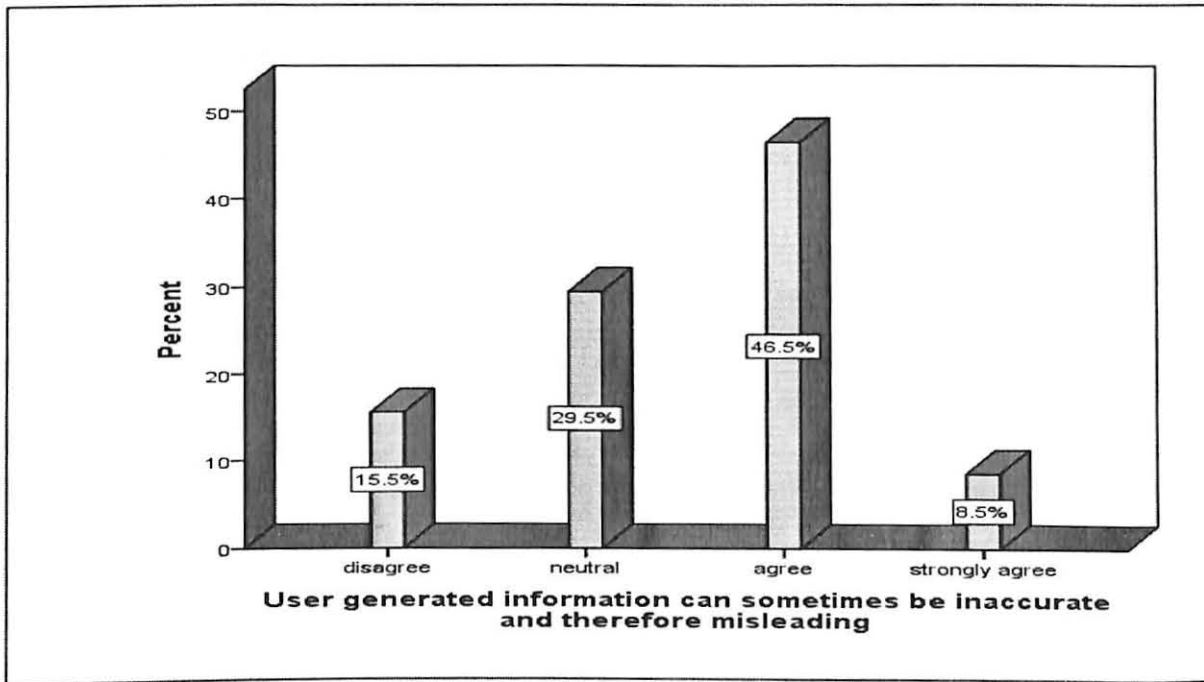
Source: Field Data (2015)

#### **4.5 The Challenges of Using Social Media as the Source of Alcohol Purchase Decision Making**

The online environment creates not only opportunities, but also challenges for the marketing communication process (Gurau, 2008). This section of the chapter therefore presented the findings in relation to the challenges of using social media using social media as the source of alcohol purchase decision making. The main challenge was found to be the lack of control on the content created and shared by customers and that unsatisfied customers/saboteurs can use social media as a source to create mischief and in the process tarnish the image of the company.

As illustrated in Figure 4.27, about 46.5% and 8.5% of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed respectively that user generated information can sometimes be inaccurate and therefore misleading while about 15.5% of the respondents disagreed. About 29.5% of the respondents were neutral.

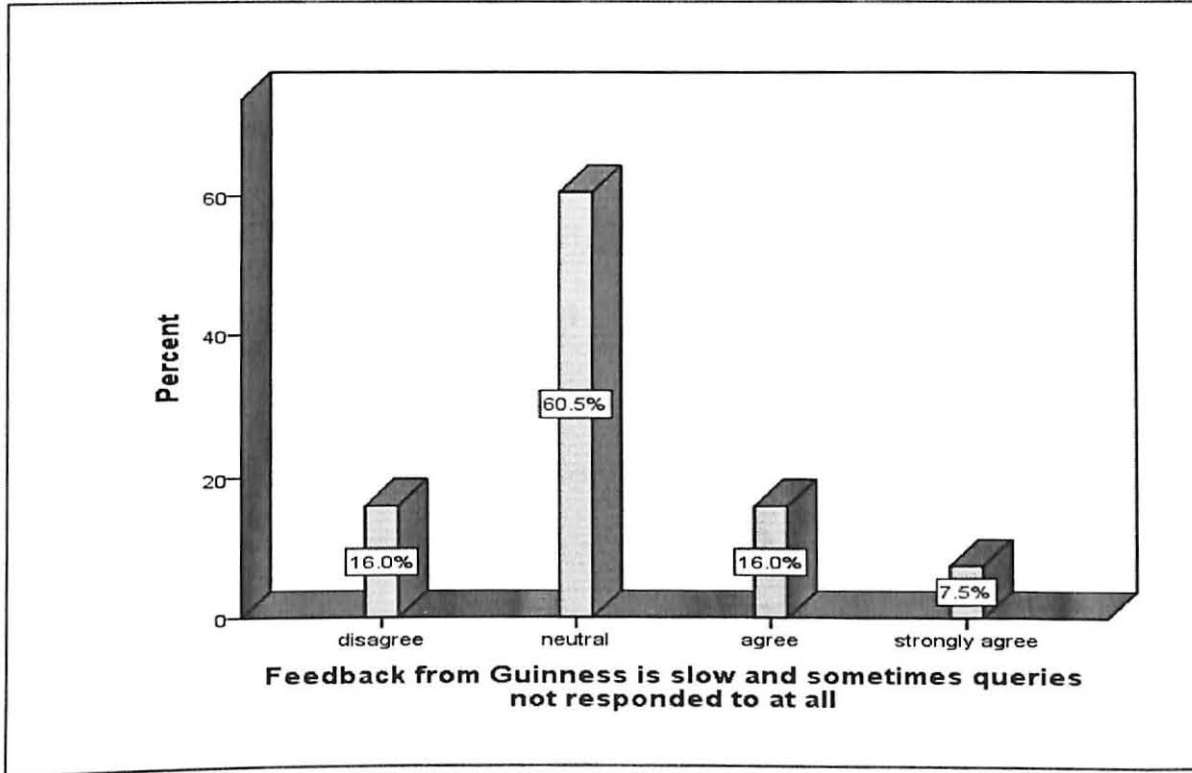
**Figure 4.27 User generated information can sometimes be inaccurate and therefore misleading**



Source: Field Data (2015)

It was interesting to find that most of the respondents were neutral when it came to the issues of interactions with Guinness being expensive, slow feedback from the company and poor internet connectivity being a challenge. These findings imply that Guinness provides prompt feedback to customers' queries. See Figure 4.28 for clarification.

**Figure 4.28 Feedback from Guinness is slow and sometimes queries not responded to at all**



Source: Field Data (2015)

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

This section of the study presents the summary of the study's findings, draws the conclusion and makes recommendations.

#### **5.2 SUMMARY OF THE PROBLEM STATEMENT**

Even though social media is known to affect and influence consumers' decision with respect to the purchase of certain products, there is a paucity of empirical findings on how social media influences consumers' decision with respect to buying alcoholic beverages. Prior to this research, different authors such as Yogesh and Yesha (2014); Ioană and Stoica (2014) and (Chianasta and Wijaya, 2014) found that social media's effect on consumers' behaviour depends on several factors such as the product or service in question and the socio-cultural context within which the purchase is being made. The findings of this study still are not conclusive and the problem statement of the study still exists. Meaning, there is still the need to conduct further studies especially with respect to the influence of culture on discussions of alcoholic beverages on social media.

#### **5.3 Summary of the Findings in Relation to the Study's Objectives**

The summary of the study's findings are as follows:

The main reasons were found to be interacting with others (friends, family and other consumers); others use it because it is easy to operate; to view online advertisement and to seek opinion about product/services. In relation to the second objective of the study, it was found that the effect of social media on customers is mixed and therefore implying that Ghanaian firms must do more in terms of enriching the content of their social media platforms if they are to influence the decision making of customers. In relation to the challenges of using social media as a source of alcohol purchase decision making, this study found the main challenge to be the lack of control on the content created and shared by customers and that unsatisfied customers/saboteurs can use social media as a source to create mischief and in the process tarnish the image of the company.

## **5.4 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

This section discussed the findings of the study.

### **5.4.1 The main reasons for using social media**

The main reasons were found to be interacting with others (friends, family and other consumers); others use it because it is easy to operate; to view online advertisement and to seek opinion about product/services. These findings imply that social media is an important avenue through which the respondents communicate and interact with their friends, families and associates. These findings imply actually echo what Patarawadee (2013) concluded to the effect that social media such as Facebook, Twitter, Whatsapp and Instagram has become part

of peoples' daily lives since social media helps people keep in touch and informed about almost any topic, product or service.

Again, these findings imply that organizations such as Guinness must also leverage on this platform to interact with customers so as to get closer to them and also identify their concerns and issues with respect to their offerings. As pointed out by Sashi (2012), these interactions with customers will help marketers determine customer needs and understand what their market might look like. What makes social media a useful platform for firms is that key business factors of social media allow consumers to estimate products, make recommendations to contacts or friends, and share any of the purchases through their social media.

#### **5.4.2 Customers Perceptions about Social Media**

It was found that most of the respondents find adverts through social media, as more interesting and more interactive; that companies, which use social media for marketing purposes, are more innovative than those that do not use it. These findings imply the respondents tend to associate with firms that advertise on social media as being more innovative and therefore have a higher chance of making more sales than firms that do not advertise on social media.

However, these findings resonate with what Frey and Rudloff (2010) concluded to the effect that a company that uses social media is more likely to create relationships with members of its target demographic rather than traditional media

where conversations between the medium and the audience are unlikely. This is because today, social media outlets such as Facebook and Twitter have made it easy for consumers to post product reviews and reach out to other like-minded individuals in their communities. This again means that as social media infiltrates the lives of consumers, before they make purchases, they are increasingly reaching out to their social media communities for opinions. In effect, this finding implies that Ghanaian firms must adopt technological innovations if they are to interact and engage more with their customers.

It must also be added that the fact that only about 36.5% of the respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that they refer to the opinion of experts on social media sites while considering any product or service implies some of the respondents do not regard information supplied by their fellow consumers on social media platform as being factual or informative enough. This finding is not surprising considering the fact that there are certain services or products that are highly technical and that requires for more education and knowledge than what ordinary customers on social media have access to. As Constantinides and Fountain (2008) observed, absolute lack of control and responsibility allows everyone on social media to become a self-proclaimed expert and influences those who are not able to differentiate between quality and garbage, making it easy for a brand to be easily tarnished.

### **5.4.3 The Effects Social Media Has On Customers**

In relation to the second objective, it was found that the effect of social media on customers is mixed and therefore implying that Ghanaian firms must do more in terms of enriching the content of their social media platforms if they are to influence the decision making of customers. Social media is perceived to be credible source of information (Frey and Rudloff, 2010) and therefore, firms including Guinness can use social media to increase the awareness of their products and by so doing, influencing decisions of consumers. These findings imply that even though social media affects some of the customers in terms of seeking more information from other users, the fact that most of the respondents were neutral implies that Guinness has its work cut out for it.

More specifically, the above finding implies Guinness has not been effective in terms of advertising and projecting its social media platforms as avenues through which users can meet, share and compare notes on the company's alcoholic beverages. These findings again imply that some customers shy away from discussing the consumption of alcohol probably because of their religious faith and would rather prefer discussing alcohol more in their private conversations. These findings therefore echo what researchers such as Ioană and Stoica (2014) and Chianasta and Wijaya (2014) found in their studies that the influence of social media on consumers' decision making is inconclusive and that the influence of social media is product or service specific, can be affected by culture and the society as well.

These findings further imply that that even though social media is gradually and increasingly becoming an effective tool of interacting with customers, its effect on consumers' final decision making is not as strong and that firms such as Guinness must not solely rely on social media to reach its target audience but must still use conventional marketing communications tools such as billboards, TV, Radio, Magazine advertisement. In effect, these findings imply that social media's influence of consumer decision making is not total and decisive.

These findings further suggest that firms must find creative means such as using discounts or incentives to have consumers recommend their product via social media. This is because the reviews on social media will induce or dissuade purchases. Firms including Guinness thus can encourage customers to share positive experiences on social media. Also, customers must be encouraged to lodge their complaints and concerns on official web pages of the company. In the same vein, it is incumbent on firms to address these concerns speedily and communicate promptly through social media.

#### **5.4.4 The Challenges of Using Social Media as the Source of Purchasing Decision of Alcohol**

The challenges of using social media as the source of alcohol purchase decision making were found to be the lack of control on the content created and shared by customers and that unsatisfied customers/saboteurs can use social media as a source to create mischief and in the process tarnish the image of the company.

These findings imply that it is not all information supplied by users on social media that is accurate, informative or factual and this therefore sometimes makes it difficult for users to determine the truth or otherwise of information supplied.

As pointed out by authors such as Bolotaeva and Cata (2010) and DiStaso et al. (2011), because social media is based on user generated content, customers are bound to share their experiences and views about brand and product, thus marketers have no control on the content created and shared by customers. However, unsatisfied customers or competitors can use customers who have axes to grind against a firm to spread malicious and misleading information, which may discourage customers from patronizing the offerings of the firm. This again leads to injurious information flowing in the network. These findings further echo what Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) observed to the effect that discontented customers can use social media as a source to air their complaints, criticisms and grievances on blogs and websites and this can harm the company's image and reputation. Additionally, these findings imply that firms must constantly monitor their social media platforms and possibly, that of competitors in order to detect as early as possible false information being spread as to remedy and mitigate their effects immediately.

## **5.5 Implications of the Study**

The fact that a sizeable percentage of the respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that they use social media to view online advertisement implies that the respondents regard social media as a platform through which they can have access to adverts and information of products or services in order to facilitate their decision making. This finding supports what authors such as Taining (2012) and Forbes and Vespoli (2013) found to the effect that adverts on social media platforms and applications has an impact on consumers' decision-making. This finding therefore, implies that Guinness Ghana Brewery in particular and other Ghanaian firms in general must recognize that social media marketing must be an important part of their marketing communication strategies. Also, this finding implies that Ghanaian firms should take cognizance of the fact that social media does influence buying behavior and that users of social media critically assess adverts and take decisions based on these adverts. As pointed out by Taining (2012), the relationship between social media and consumer decision-making present that social media affects advertising attitudes, brand attitudes, and purchasing intentions of consumers.

Moreover, these findings imply that even though the respondents have positive perceptions about social media, firms including Guinness must do more in terms of enriching the content, message and emotional cues of the social media adverts in order to influence customers' decision-making. As pointed out researchers such as Yogesh and Yesha (2014) and Ioană and Stoica (2014), social media must be

lively, interactive, fun and informative all at the same time if it is to have a chance of influencing customers' decision making.

In relation to the challenge of using social media as a source of alcohol purchase decision-making, the finding implies that it is not all information supplied by users on social media that is accurate, informative or factual and this therefore sometimes makes it difficult for users to determine the truth or otherwise of information supplied. As pointed out by authors such as Bolotaeva and Cata (2010) and DiStaso et al. (2011), because social media is based on user generated content, customers are bound to share their experiences and views about brand and product, thus marketers have no control on the content created and shared by customers.

However, unsatisfied customers or competitors can use customers who have axes to grind against a firm to spread malicious and misleading information, which may discourage customers from patronizing the offerings of the firm. This again leads to injurious information flowing in the network. This finding further echoes what Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) observed to the effect that discontented customers can use social media as a source to air their complaints, criticisms and grievances on blogs and websites and this can harm the company's image and reputation. This finding implies that firms must constantly monitor their social media platforms and possibly, that of competitors in order to detect as early as possible false information being spread as to remedy and mitigate their effects immediately.

## **5.6 Recommendations of the Study**

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were proffered:

### **5.6.1 Social Media Policy**

Creating policy, whether official or recommended guidelines, is critical to the successful use of social media within a station. It is therefore recommended that top management of Guinness should work with stakeholders to generate a policy that is widely accepted by those who will be affected by its implications. Thus the use of a “social media” or “policy” committee is recommended to solicit information from all categories of staff to generate a social media policy or recommended guidelines. This policy should help to reflect and align the company’s overall image and mandates, fostering a conflict-free environment when rules are acknowledged and accepted. It was in addition recommended that Guinness should incorporate into its professional ethics, aspects of social media policies that defines the dos and don'ts; provide effective training to users and protect their privacy interests.

### **5.6.2 Set a Clear Objective for Social Media Advertising**

It is recommended that the social media strategy of Guinness should clearly establish the purpose of being on the social web i.e. who is it they plan to target, what is it that they seek to achieve, which groups or Social media sites should be targeted and how can they uniquely differentiate themselves from what others are

established brand identity, and not be limited by historical facts but instead be willing to take risks and come up with new ideas. Social media is also very effective when combined with the regular marketing efforts in building up expectations for events. It is an easy way to engage with the audience in a timely manner. It must be noted that relationships are nowadays more established by the audience and it is therefore sharp to invite those who interact with the company in one application to join another application. Guinness has to actively work with integrating their different social platforms. By using plug-ins, the company can create opportunities to share information across the different applications very easily.

#### **5.6.5 Consistency**

Moreover, it is also important to convey a consistent message across the different applications. The message has to be same but can be expressed in different ways due to the technical differences as well as because of the different people using the sites. Due to the issue that certain countries only want to communicate in their native language companies can have local sites dedicated to certain countries. It is important to keep in mind that customers have to see the business as a single company and not as an entity made up of different parts. Firm should also integrate their strategy within the company. It is very important that businesses integrate their thinking around social media into the whole business concept. All instances must be able to find ways to cooperate.

doing. A right social media strategy can help the firm build a more direct and positive relationship with customers, which will in turn drive increased engagement and retention.

### **5.6.3 Engage and Build Relationship with Customers**

Again, it is important Guinness to engage with its consumers and build relationships. In order to develop a relationship with someone, it is always advisable to take the lead and to be active. Because social media is about sharing and interaction, it is important to have up to date content and engage in discussions with consumers. When considering the social media efforts, firms including Guinness must be aware that firm involvement must extend beyond responding to negative comments and defending product offerings. Participants on social media applications have the desire to actively engage and to become both producers and consumers of information. It is also important to be interesting. Firms including Guinness need to give customers a reason to engage with them - one that extends beyond saying that the company is the best. Guinness should instead try to find out what consumers would like to hear; what they would like to talk about; what they might find interesting, and valuable.

### **5.6.4 Effective Integration**

Furthermore, it is critical that Guinness integrates its use of social media in to the firm's marketing communication mix. The company should also be working with integrating the same communication strategy globally and with the already

### **5.6.6 Well-defined Metrics**

Additionally, it is recommended that a firm's social media strategy must encompass well-defined metrics that reflect progress toward the firm's business goals (as defined in the vision). However, first and foremost, they must align with the same type of metrics that drive the business today. For example, a social media strategy focused on sales as an outcome should look at driving traffic from social media, converting that traffic into leads, and successfully cross-selling and up-selling customers that are interacting across social media channels. In effect, viewing the efforts through the same eyes that traditional channels evaluate success.

### **5.6.7 Effective Social Media Governance**

Governance is important. A social media strategy should include clear governance and effective organizational structures, whether that means establishing a dedicated social media center of excellence or appointing social media champions across a firm's functional groups and/or product lines. Regardless of the specific measures or structures in place, the firm's goal should be to support efficient, effective engagement in social media with the right skills, staff, and controls. This structure must be nimble, include processes for iteration, and include top management executives. All of this work will prepare firms for the successful development and implementation of a comprehensive social media strategy.

### **5.6.8 The creation of effective advertising**

Lastly, it is recommended that to enhance its brand equity, Guinness should ensure that its brand message is well communicated through the creation of effective advertising. Guinness' advertising must communicate its objectives and values to the public in an effective manner. It should be remembered that the main aim of any advertising is the selling of something and, therefore, the advertisement in itself is a sales talk. To achieve this, advertisements must be developed and managed in a way to, first attract the attention of its target audience, and maintain their interest long enough to enhance their desire for a particular product or service. Moreover, the advertisement must convince its targeted audience to take some kind of action (i.e., adopting the product). This is a common way of determining if the ad is successful.

### **5.7 Conclusion of the Study**

Today's global media landscape has undergone a huge revolution over the past decade. New marketing communications tools such as social media are progressively replacing traditional media, and the buzz about these new marketing opportunities seems unlimited. This trend of consumers becoming fans of brands on these platforms and using them as an increasing source of information about brands leads to the assumption that these platforms in addition to traditional marketing communication instruments exerts an important impact on a brand's success. Since these marketing communications tools offers an opportunity for

consumers to talk to hundreds or even thousands of other consumers around the world, companies are no longer the sole source of brand communication.

This study found out that social media offers more than just traditional ways of marketing banks and that social media allows customers to create, connect, converse, contribute, vote and share information. However, it was found that currently, social media influence on consumers' decision making is marginal, inconclusive and still at the rudimentary stage especially in Ghana. Based on this finding, this study concludes that even though social media is increasingly becoming a valuable addition to Guinness' repertoire of marketing communications tools, its contribution to customer decision making is not conclusive. It is further concluded that Ghanaian firms that are not using social media might be missing their biggest opportunity to connect directly with customers before their competitors do. But those who do take this step without understanding the customer expectations are likely to fail and may not be given a second chance. Also, it is not enough for firms to just have a social media presence on sites like Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn etc. To really get customers to emotionally connect with the brand, Guinness and other firms in Ghana will need to tap into the right streams of dialog to kick start engagement and social participation with their brand. Hence it is important that Ghanaian firms define a clear social media strategy before they use this medium to reach their customers.

## **5.8 Areas for Future Study**

Social media advertising is a recent phenomenon on the Ghanaian advertising landscape. Even though it has been fully embraced by the Ghanaian populace, little is known about the socio-cultural factors that impede their effective utilization in influencing consumers' decision making. It will therefore be interesting to investigate and identify the socio-cultural factors that determines the effective utilization of social media in influencing consumers' decision making.

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## APPENDIX "A" RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

## GHANA INSTITUTE OF JOURNALISM (GIJ)

Dear Sir/Madam,

### QUESTIONNAIRE ON THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ADVERTISING ON ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES: A STUDY OF GGBL

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this research study. The survey aims to gather data for my MBA project on the above-mentioned topic. Your participation in this research study is completely voluntary and is greatly appreciated; there is no right or wrong answers to the questions that will follow. Please read each of the following sets of questions carefully and select the response, which most closely indicates your opinion. Please be sure to answer each question. Your responses are confidential; the survey will not be used for any commercial purpose.

#### SECTION I (DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION)

##### 1. Sex

- a. Male [ ]                      b. Female [ ]

##### 2. Age

- a. 18--35 [ ]                      b. 36-45 [ ]                      c. Above 46 years

##### 3. Academic qualifications

- a. Primary [ ]                      b. Middle/JSS [ ]                      c. M  
Secondary/Vocational [ ]  
d. Tertiary [ ]

##### 4. Employment status

- a. Employed [ ]                      b. Unemployed [ ]  
c. Other [ ]

##### 5. Employment status

- a. Unemployed [ ]                      b. Employed [ ]

##### 6. Currently, how many bottles of Guinness do you consume on a typical day??

- a. 1-2 (bottles) [ ]                      b. 3-4 (bottles) [ ]                      c. 5 or more bottles [ ]

##### 7. You consider yourself to be a

- a. Light drinker [ ]                      b. Average drinker [ ]                      c. Heavy drinker [ ]

#### SECTION II (CUSTOMERS PERCEPTIONS ABOUT SOCIAL MEDIA)



**SECTION III (THE EFFECTS OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON CONSUMERS)**

**12. To what extent do you agree with the following statements about the effects social media has on you? (Where 1 = Strongly Disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Neutral; 4= Agree; 5 = Strongly Agree)**

S/N	Variables	1
i.	I refer to the pages / discussion forums on the company's social media sites in order to get more information about products	
ii.	Comments and likes from others are more reliable than Guinness Ghana's ads	
iii.	I am affected by information and discussions about alcoholic beverages available on social media pages	
iv.	The content of the ads on the company's social media platform affect my decisions	
v.	The messages in the ads on the company's social media platform affect my decisions	
vi.	The colour scheme used in the ads on the company's social media platform affect my decisions	
vii.	The models used in the ads on the company's social media platform affect my decisions	
viii.	The general presentation of the ads on the company's social media platform affect my decisions	
ix.	The music or jingle used in the ads on the company's social media platform affect my decisions	
x.	The taglines in the company's ads on the company's social media platform affect my decisions	
xi.	The emotional cues in the contents of the ads on the company's social media platform affect my decisions	

**13. Interactions on social media influences my alcohol purchase decisions**

- a. Strongly disagree
- b. Disagree
- c. Neutral
- d. Agree
- e. Strongly agree

**14. I have purchased alcoholic beverages in the past based on Ads I saw on Guinness Ghana's social media platforms**

- a. Strongly disagree

- b. Disagree
- c. Neutral
- d. Agree
- e. Strongly agree

**1.5 Overall, Ads on Guinness Ghana's social media platforms influences me to buy alcoholic beverages**

- a. Strongly disagree
- b. Disagree
- c. Neutral
- d. Agree
- e. Strongly agree

**SECTION III (THE CHALLENGES OF USING SOCIAL MEDIA TO INTERACT WITH GUNNESS GHANA BREWERIES)**

**To what do you agree with the following?**

**16. Interacting with Guinness on social media is expensive**

- a. Strongly disagree
- b. Disagree
- c. Neutral
- d. Agree
- e. Strongly agree

**17. User generated information can sometimes be inaccurate and therefore misleading**

- a. Strongly disagree
- b. Disagree
- c. Neutral
- d. Agree
- e. Strongly agree

**18. Feedback from Guinness is slow and sometimes queries not responded to at all**

- a. Strongly disagree
- b. Disagree
- c. Neutral
- d. Agree
- e. Strongly agree

**19. Frequent interruptions of internet connectivity make it a challenge interacting with Guinness on social media**

- a. Strongly disagree
- b. Disagree
- c. Neutral

- d. Agree
- e. Strongly agree

**Thank you for your time**