

ABSTRACT

THESIS: Information Disclosure on Facebook: A Content Analysis of American and Kenyan User Profiles

STUDENT: Sarah Wanjiku Thotho

DEGREE: Master of Arts in Public Relations

COLLEGE: Communication, Information and Media

DATE: July, 2010

PAGES: 108

This study examines information disclosure of Facebook users in America and Kenya. The main aim of this study is to find out the specific type of personal and demographic information that individuals disclose on their profiles. The literature review details the nature of social networking sites highlighting studies that have been carried out in the past on these sites. Self-disclosure is also discussed as described in the social penetration theory. An overview of the practice of public relations profession in Kenya is also given. The research study employs the content analysis methodology, with a total of 500 Facebook profiles being analyzed. Results of this study indicate that users disclose a lot of information on their Facebook profiles such as the use of a self-portrait as the main identifying mark on their profiles, their dates of birth, personal information such as religious and political views and education and work information. There are also major gender differences in information disclosure. There are also differences in information disclosure on Facebook between American users and Kenyan users.