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**THE ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE
CORPORATE IMAGE: A CASE STUDY OF KAMPALA CAPITAL CITY AUTHORITY
DURING THE KITEEZI LANDFILL COLLAPSE**

BY

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DECLARATION

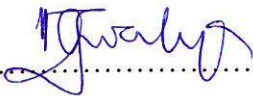
I, KEMIREMBE DAPHINE, declare that this dissertation is my original work except where due acknowledgement has been made in the study. I declare that the dissertation has never been submitted anywhere for any award.

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APPROVAL

I confirm that this dissertation has been written under my supervision and has been submitted for the award of the Master of Journalism and Communication with my approval.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis, to my beloved daughter, Kirabo Druella Lubega whose presence gave me purpose and made me resilient. I also dedicate this thesis to my parents, whose constant support has sustained me throughout this academic journey. Finally, I extend this dedication to every individual who contributed to this academic journey through their encouragement, guidance and support until the completion of this research.

May God bless you all.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION	i
APPROVAL	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	v
ACRONYMS.....	ix
ABSTRACT.....	x
CHAPTER ONE.....	1
INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND	1
1.0 Introduction	1
1.1 Background to the Study	2
1.1.1 About KCCA	3
1.1.2 About Kiteezi landfill collapse	4
1.2 Social Media, Corporate Image.....	6
1.3 Statement of the Problem	7
1.4 Purpose of the Study	9
1.5 General of Objective of the study	9
1.6 Specific Objectives of the Study	9
1.7 Research Questions	9
1.8 Justification of the Study.....	9
1.9 Significance of the Study	10
1.10 Scope of the Study.....	10
1.10.1 Content scope	10
1.10.2 Geographical scope.....	10
1.9.3 Time scope.....	11
1.9.4 Definition of key terms	11
CHAPTER TWO	13
LITERATURE REVIEW & THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK.....	13
2.0 Introduction	13

2.1 Social Media Overview	13
2.2 Social Media, Government Entities	15
2.3 Corporate Image	18
2.3.1 Enhancing the Internal Image of the Company	19
2.4 Strategies of Building a Sustainable Corporate Image on Social Media	20
2.4.1 The relationship between social media and Corporate Image sustainability.....	22
2.4.2 Information sharing and sustainable corporate image	24
2.4.3 Feedback on social media and sustainable corporate image	25
2.4.4 Crisis communication	25
2.4.5 Research Gap	26
2.5 Theoretical Framework.....	28
2.5.1 Theory of corporate image	28
2.5.2 Technological Determinism Theory (TDT)	31
CHAPTER THREE	35
METHODOLOGY	35
3.0. Introduction	35
3.1 Research Approach	35
3.2 Research Design.....	36
3.3 Study Area.....	37
3.4 Study population	37
3.5 Sample Size.....	37
3.6 Sampling technique	38
3.6.3 Sampling the respondents.....	39
3.6.4 Sampling the posts.....	40
3.7 Data collection methods	41
3.7.1 Content Analysis.....	42
3.7.2 In-depth Interviews.....	43
3.8 Data Collection Tools	44
3.8.1 Interview Guide	44
3.8.2 Coding sheet	44
3.9 Data Processing, Analysis	45

3.9.1 Gender consideration	45
3.10 Ethical Considerations.....	46
3.11 Study Limitation.....	46
CHAPTER FOUR.....	48
FINDINGS AND DATA PRESENTATION	48
4.0 Introduction	48
4.1 Strategies Employed to Sustain KCCA’s Corporate Image Using X	48
4.1.1 Press statements	48
4.1.2 Victim engagement.....	49
4.1.3 Solidarity with survivors	51
4.1.4 Avoiding outbursts	51
4.1.5 Consistent use of visuals.....	52
4.1.6 Blending X and legacy media.....	53
4.2 Public’s Reaction to Kiteezi Landfill Information Shared on KCCA’s X Account	54
4.2.1 Anger and complaints	54
4.2.2 Calling for resignation	55
4.2.3 Doubts on deaths numbers.....	55
4.2.4 Disappointment in KCCA management.....	56
4.2.6 Appreciation and advice	57
4.2.7 Sympathy with KCCA.....	58
4.2.8 Excitement and trust in new KCCA interim leadership	58
4.3 X Challenges During Kiteezi Tragedy	59
4.3.1 Insults.....	59
4.3.2 Communicating eviction notice.....	60
4.3.3 Misinformation	61
4.3.4 Fear	62
4.3.5 Overwhelming inquiries	63
4.3.6 Information overload	63
4.3.7 Contradicting politicians.....	64
4.4 Conclusion.....	65

CHAPTER FIVE	66
DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS	66
5.0 Introduction.....	66
5.1 Strategies Employed to Maintain Corporate Image Using X	66
5.2 Public’s Reaction to Kiteezi Landfill Information Shared on KCCA’s X Account.....	69
5.3 Challenges KCCA faced while using X during the Kiteezi tragedy.....	75
5.4 Conclusion	78
CHAPTER SIX FOUR	79
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	79
6.0 Introduction.....	79
6.1 Summary of Findings.....	79
6.2 Conclusion	80
6.3 Recommendations.....	81
6.4 Areas of Further Research	83
REFERENCES	84
APPENDANCES.....	98
Appendix i: Data Collection Tools	98
Appendix ii: Interview Guide	100
Appendix iii: Introductory Letter.....	102
Appendix iv: Data Collection Authorisation Letter.....	103
Appendix v: Data Collection Acceptance Letter	104
Appendix vi: Extracted KCCA X Posts.....	105

ACRONYMS

KCCA:	Kampala Capital City Authority
ICT:	Information Communication Technology
IGG:	Inspector General of Government
TDT:	Technology Determinism Theory
TCI:	Theory of Corporate Image
UBOS:	Uganda Bureau of Statistics
UN:	United Nations
UN DESA:	United Nations Department of Economic and social Affairs
PCA	Public and Corporate Affairs
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
NITA- U	National Information Technology Authority- Uganda

ABSTRACT

The main purpose of the study was to examine the role of social media in building a sustainable organizational corporate Image. The study was guided by two theories: Theory of Corporate Image (TCI) and Technology Determinism Theory (TDT). The study took a qualitative approach in which data was collected using qualitative tools such as qualitative content analysis which was applied on data extracted from KCCA's X account and thematic analysis applied on data collected using in-depth interviews. The sample for qualitative context analysis included 41 posts on KCCA's X about Kiteezi landfill collapse while the sample for in-depth interviews included only eight accessed and willing participants. Under objective one which sought to examine the strategies KCCA employed to sustain its corporate image on X during Kiteezi landfill collapse, it was discovered that KCCA used X to sustain its corporate image during Kiteezi landfill collapse by posting press releases of what had been done in response to the tragedy, victims' engagement, and shelter provision. Under objective two which examined how the public reacted to information shared on KCCA's X page during Kiteezi landfill collapse, it was found that the public reacted with anger, doubts, inquiries, complaints, sympathy, excitement and giving advice. Under objective three which explored the challenges KCCA encountered in its efforts to sustain corporate image using X during Kiteezi Landfill collapse, it was observed that misinformation, abuses and insults, psychological and emotional fear and politicians' falsehoods were the leading challenges faced by KCCA social media team during Kiteezi landfill collapse. This study's outcomes are significant because they have ably explored the strategies needed to uphold corporate image during crises. The discovered challenges aid other institutions on finding solutions earlier to avoid facing the same in case of a crisis.

Keywords: Corporate image. Kiteezi Landfill collapse. Garbage. Technology. Social media.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.0 Introduction

This chapter includes the background of the study, problem statement, research objectives, and research questions, scope of the study, justification, significances and definition of key terms. The study examines the Role of Social Media in Building a Sustainable Organizational Corporate Image using a case of Kampala Capital City Authority during Kiteezi Landfill Collapse. The focus was on social media because the rapid development of digital technology has significantly changed the way individuals and organizations communicate. Social media, in particular, has become a powerful tool that has transformed how people access information, interact, and form relationships. While initially designed for personal use, social media is now widely used by organizations as part of their communication strategies (Jumalik & Oktaviany, 2023).

Through platforms such as Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), Instagram, LinkedIn and many more, organizations are able to engage directly with various stakeholders, including customers, employees, investors, and the public. These platforms allow two-way communication, enabling the public to provide immediate feedback and giving organizations the opportunity to respond in real time. This has led to a shift from traditional, one-directional communication to a more interactive and transparent approach (Jumalik & Oktaviany, 2023).

As a result, organizations are increasingly expected to be responsive and proactive in managing their corporate image, especially during times of crisis. Social media has thus become an essential tool in building a positive and sustainable corporate image. Therefore, this study examined the role of social media in building a sustainable organizational corporate image using a case study of Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA) during the Kiteezi landfill collapse. The study examined the strategies used by KCCA, public reactions, and the challenges encountered in sustaining its corporate image during the crisis.

1.1 Background to the Study

Social media is changing the way business is conducted, almost five billion videos are watched on YouTube every single day (Kaneda, 2023) thus social media having an extensive worldwide presence. Out of the total global population of over 8.1 billion people, over 4 billion are internet users and of these, over 3 billion are active social media users (Kaneda, 2023). Social media use has increased among consumers around the world, causing an increase in the adoption of social media as tactics for many communication professionals, Erdogmus, (2016). Because this new form of communication is growing at such a rapid pace, it is important to analyze the impact it has on the overall relations practice as well as on how businesses are putting it into their communications curriculum to better prepare future practitioners, Gretzel, (2010).

According to Jansen (2011), the communications world is dramatically moving in a digital direction and those who understand this transformation will communicate much more effectively than those who do not.” Public relations practitioners are in the business of communicating with publics and therefore must understand this transformation in order to communicate effectively, Tatar, (2016). While the globalization and competition in the market are growing very fast, company’s corporate image becomes an important tool not only for trying to survive in competitive environment, but also for ensuring successful company’s performance (United Nations Department of Economic and social Affairs, 2023). Situation in media requires that public relations which are responsible for positive image development should incorporate the use of Internet Technologies (Charbit, 2022). Companies that use new channels of communication could develop and sustain positive image which may foster customer trust, involvement and positive opinion towards the company (UN DESA, 2016). Social media opens opportunities for companies to use various means for positive image development and that is why companies allocate more resources for them (Abdullah et al., 2020).

In developed countries like USA, Canada, China and Japan, technology has changed the way people communicate and make decisions. The high penetration rate of the Internet has led people to initiate new types of social interaction, (Abdullah et al., 2020; Yusuf, 2018). For example, social media sites such as X are now popular tools for everyday communications. Social media presentation has become an emerging trend for firms as a cost-effective tool to build their corporate image and to enrich customer relationships. In addition, social media has been adopted

as a part of companies' integrated communication strategy and as a new way of managing public relations, Yusuf, (2018).

In Africa, social media gives the opportunity for companies to communicate directly without intermediates and to create close relationships with audiences (Kasemsap, 2016). Direct interaction between the company and its audiences is created while changing the communication model of one-to-many with the model of many-to-many, (Becker et al., 2015.) The latter allows audiences of the company to express their opinion, and the former allows audiences of the company to integrate the feedback into tactics of public relations (Markus, 2022). Through the direct interaction with audiences, a company shows that its performance is based on collaboration and seeking for common goals. (Kaplan et al. 2009) noticed that earlier companies could control information with their press announcements, but today companies become just observers without possibility to change the public comments of customers (Kazokiene & Stravinskiene, 2022). Company can only partly control messages in social media.

In Uganda, social media is a sensation that gained reputation in 2009 (The Daily Monitor, 2015). According to Social Media Stats Uganda social media statistics as of June 2025, X was the dominant microblogging App enjoying a 36.6% lead followed by Pinterest following 18.2% while Facebook and YouTube enjoyed 16.3% and 15.3% respectively (StatsCounter Global Stats, 2025). Many Corporations both big and small are using social media to promote their brands and connect with their audiences. With social media, corporations can interact directly with customers and receive direct feedback. For many businesses, social media is the first place that people look for when researching a new business (Vafaei et al., 2016). Thus, social media is the perfect tool to use for lead generation as well as brand loyalty. However, when a corporation creates a social media account, it should also consider how social media could influence its brand image (Nisar 2019). For both good and bad, social media can strengthen feelings about a brand much more than other marketing media can.

1.1.1 About KCCA

Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA) is the Central Government body mandated to run Kampala City. The institution has been in existence since 1 March 2011. The headquarters of KCCA are located on Nakasero Hill in the central business district of Kampala. The highly

appealing, interactive and instant feedback nature of social media was adopted by KCCA as one of its public engagement forum as soon as the institution was created by an Act of Parliament in 2011 and it became operationalized on April 15, of the same year with appointment of Jennifer Musisi as the first executive director (International Growth Centre, 2025). Eight months later, an official X account [@KCCAUG](#) was created in January 2012. Research carried out in KCCA on the use of social media by (Achol, 2019) revealed that the use of social media resulted into greater transparency and accountability as many of the activities are posted on social media

The constant use of social media by KCCA is said to have resulted into greater engagement of the city dwellers through interactive and instant platforms such as X (Agena et al., 2019). Some of the feedback from the city dwellers through these platforms has been incorporated into city planning and administration hence improving the quality-of-service delivery by KCCA, (KCCA information system strategic plan 2020-2026). X has served as one of KCCA's platforms for sustainable corporate image where information meant to engage with residents, business operators and visitors is regularly shared (Agena et al., 2019; Achol, 2019). KCCA offers community outreach programs, volunteer opportunities for employees, and partnerships with non-profit organizations to address social issues such as education, healthcare, or poverty alleviation.

1.1.2 About Kiteezi landfill collapse

The Kiteezi landfill collapse which occurred on August 10, 2024 left approximately 35 people dead (The Observer, 2024). This put KCCA's political and technical leadership in the spotlight and the public demanded for answers on how the citizens had perished and property worth millions of money destroyed (Winter, 2024; Nankya, 2024; Musani, 2024). Winter (2024) observed that the disaster put KCCA officials under fire as City dwellers accused them of being negligent despite the several warnings about garbage which urgently needed decommissioning but they remained adamant until the landfill turned out to be one of Kampala's worst catastrophes. With the collapse of Kiteezi landfill, Kampala became a centre of uncollected garbage and almost every street was filled with all sorts of rubbish producing a stench that left several business operators especially restaurant operators affected (Odongo, 2024). According to NTV-Uganda's website article of *August 16, 2024, the death of citizens in Kiteezi landfill collapse*, the reports on ignored expert warnings and uncollected garbage, piled pressure on

KCCA. As a result, KCCA's image and public trust fell down and many members of the public kept criticizing the institution for being negligent despite expert warnings on the looming disaster (NTV-Uganda, 2024).

Social media platforms such as X were used for sharing up-to-date information about Kiteezi landfill collapse. For instance, KCCA's first statement about Kiteezi landfill was posted on the institution's official X handle @KCCAUG on August 10, 2024. The statement read:

“The Kampala Capital City Authority Landfill in Kiteezi has had a structural failure in waste mass this morning resulting in a collapsed section of the landfill. The level of damage is still being assessed. However no fatalities have been recorded at this time. Our teams, along with other government agencies are on ground taking the necessary measures to ensure the area is secure and to prevent any further incidents. We are closely monitoring the situation to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the community. We will update you because this is a developing story.”

Even President Yoweri Museveni's first message mourning the death of people in Kiteezi landfill collapse and commiserating with bereaved families was posted on X on August 11, 2024 at 12:55PM. In the same message, Museveni ordered the IGG to probe KCCA officials with the aim of prosecuting them over negligence. This is why this study examined how KCCA used X to sustain its organizational corporate image amidst Kiteezi landfill thus becoming crucial and somehow timely since it provides insights on how organizations can deal with similar disasters, which test their reputation. Therefore, this section gives the general description of the study about an assessment of the role of social media in building a sustainable organizational corporate Image. The study was conducted at Kampala Capital City Authority.

Kampala City Council (KCC) began using the Kiteezi landfill in 1996 (Aryampa, 2021). The Kiteezi landfill located in Kasangati Town Council, Wakiso District was receiving a wide range of waste; from household garbage and market refuse to industrial scraps and institutional waste from schools, hospitals, and shopping malls. Kampala currently produces about 2,100 tons of solid waste each day, a figure expected to rise to around 3,400 tons within the next five years due to rapid population growth (Aryampa, 2021; Aryampa, 2019). This waste is collected from across the city by companies contracted by KCCA and transported to Kiteezi using large garbage trucks. (Ssuubi, 2024).

Ssuubi (2024) noted that at the time of tragic collapse, Kiteezi landfill was handling more than 600 tons of garbage every day which had turned into a huge mountain. It was 12 years ever since Kiteezi landfill had been condemned when the 2024 tragedy that killed approximately 35 people occurred. The place was officially condemned in 2012 after reaching its limit and the population surrounding it could not allow its expansion (Aryampa, 2021). Ssuubi (2024) writes that KCCA continued to dump garbage at Kiteezi despite condemnation because of limited resources and other management constraints in the country at large whereby waste disposal sites are not adequately provided to relieve the area.

1.2 Social Media, Corporate Image

Social media has become an integral part of modern society in Uganda (Kakumba, 2021). X is one of the popular social media sites that are being used in Uganda. Uganda contributes 3.4 million active users with an annual growth of 900,000 users (Kakumba, 2021). Social media has become more resourceful and users are now using this platform as a way to practice citizen journalism thus you do not have to wait for the newspapers, radio stations or even television stations for news bytes because uploads of events are made as and when they unfold.

Corporate image, describes the manner in which a company, its activities, and its products or services are perceived by outsiders. In a competitive business climate, many businesses actively work to create and communicate a positive image to their customers, shareholders, the financial community, and the general public (Chaves et al, 2003). A company that mismanages or ignores its image is likely to encounter a variety of problems.

Liang et al. (2024) highlight some of the warning signs that a business might have an image problem which include high employee turnover, the disappearance of major customers, a drop in stock value, and poor relationships with vendors or government officials. If an image problem is left unaddressed, a company might find many of its costs of doing business rising dramatically, including the costs of product development, sales support, employee wages, and shareholder dividends. In addition, since the majority of consumers base their purchase decisions at least partly on trust, current and future sales levels are likely to suffer as well (Liang et al., 2024)

In businesses of all sizes, it is vital that managers recognize the importance of creating and maintaining a strong image, and that they also make employees aware of it. Corporate image begins within the offices of a company's managers. It should be based on the development of good company policies, rather than on controlling the damage caused by bad company policies.

Fill & Roper (2012) recommend that business owners and managers take the following steps toward improving their companies' image: focus on the firm's long-term reputation; base actions on substantive policies; insist on candor in all business dealings; and uphold the stakeholders' right to know. After all, Fill and Roper (2012) note that a good corporate image can take years to build and only moments to destroy.

In today's digital age, social media has emerged as a powerful tool for organizations to shape and maintain their corporate image (Trang, 2021). This case study focuses on the Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA) to explore how social media can contribute to the development of a sustainable corporate image. Leveraging social media platforms such as X in engaging with diverse stakeholders, including residents, businesses, and government agencies helps organisations to establish a direct line of communication, enabling them to disseminate information, address concerns, and showcase their initiatives in real-time (Lutz & Hoffmann, 2014). However, the extent to which KCCA has leveraged on X to achieve these has not been explored. Organisations also understand the importance of engaging with the community on social media to solicit feedback, gather insights, and involve residents in decision-making processes (Rijal, 2023). By actively responding to comments, messages, and inquiries, organisations such as KCCA demonstrates a willingness to listen and adapt, thereby strengthening its relationship with the community and enhancing its corporate image (Watson & Kitchen, 2015).

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Social media usage for corporate image and reputation building, is increasingly becoming paramount in organisations' operations; but studies exploring the same remain scanty (Briones et al., 2011). Likewise the use of social media platforms, particularly X as a tool for public relations and how these relationships are evaluated seem hazy, as most organisations are yet to recognize their impact on image and reputation especially in the African context (Lovejoy et al., 2012).

Henceforth, this study aimed to contribute to this knowledge gap by understanding how organisations use X as a public relations tool in sustaining organisational corporate image during crises such as Kiteezi in the African context (Quainoo & Antwi, 2015). There are several existing gaps in the use of social media in building a sustainable organisational corporate image. For instance, the gaps in using X for corporate image including in managing online conversations, and having consistent and strategic content management (Mtjilibe, 2024). There has been limited research with regard to understanding the influence that social media platforms bear on organisations like KCCA during communication crises such as Kiteezi landfill collapse (Njoroge, 2019). This is why this study examined how KCCA used X to sustain its image during the Kiteezi landfill collapse and related strategies as well the challenges. This is because the increasingly rapid development of digital technology is changing the way people, agencies, and companies communicate. Social media is one of the digital communication media, tools used to exchange information or communicate in digital format (Jumalik & Oktaviany, 2023). Social media has played a great role in shaping business' sustainable corporate image, so it is important to invest in building a good social media presence (Samojlovska, 2016). Sustainable Corporate Image is defined as the perception, reputation, and portrayal of a company in relation to its sustainability efforts and practices (Javed, 2022; Tinwala & Biswas, 2020).

Despite the widespread recognition of social media's ability to influence corporate image, there is a dearth of comprehensive studies that specifically address the sustainability aspect of this phenomenon (Yang & Kang, 2021). The existing studies focus on short-term outcomes, like immediate responses to social media campaigns, developing crisis management strategies hence not considering the enduring impact on an organisation's image overtime. Additionally, whereas many theories such as the Theory of Corporate Image, talk about image management practices, they often fall short of addressing the evolving nature of social media and its implications for long-term image sustainability (Coombs & Holladay, 2021). This gap highlights the need for a more nuanced understanding of how organisations can leverage social media to build and sustain a positive corporate image over long-term, considering factors like changing audience perceptions. Therefore, it is against this background that the study will be conducted to assess how KCCA has used social media focusing on X to build its sustainable organizational corporate image.

1.4 Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study is to examine the role of social media in building a sustainable organizational corporate Image.

1.5 General of Objective of the study

The study's general objective is to examine the role of social media in building a sustainable organizational corporate image, specifically focusing on the case study of Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA) during the Kiteezi Landfill collapse.

1.6 Specific Objectives of the Study

- i. To examine the strategies KCCA employed to sustain its corporate image on X during the Kiteezi landfill collapse.
- ii. To examine how the public reacted to information shared on KCCA's X page during the Kiteezi landfill collapse.
- iii. To explore the challenges KCCA encountered in its efforts to sustain its corporate image using X during the Kiteezi Landfill collapse.

1.7 Research Questions

1. What strategies did KCCA employ to sustain its corporate image on X during the Kiteezi landfill collapse?
2. How did the public react to information shared on KCCA's X page during the Kiteezi landfill collapse?
3. What challenges did KCCA encounter in its efforts to sustain its corporate image using X during the Kiteezi Landfill collapse?

1.8 Justification of the Study

Social media has been reported to carry positive outcomes if utilized well in an organization but also reported to tarnish corporate image if poorly applied and managed (Agena et al., 2019). Social media is known for enabling the spread of wrong propaganda about an organization

(Hassan & Basit, 2020a). This can turn away the interest of clients and other stakeholders that may eventually lead to collapse of the organization. Some people can masquerade as organization employees by creating fake social media accounts and start scamming people which further tarnishes the organizational corporate image (Consumer International, 2019). In some instances, the organisation's image can be soiled by a staff who does wrong things. For instance its staff was arrested on allegations of spreading false news regarding corona virus on social media. Therefore, it is important to carry out this study to identify the gap and make recommendations to KCCA to design strategies that can mitigate unfortunate incidents and aid the organization to exercise good corporate image.

1.9 Significance of the Study

The study has provided information relevant to corporate image sustainability during crises such as the Kiteezi landfill collapse. The study outcomes are important to public and private institutions' planning on how to handle eventualities that threaten the sustainability of their corporate image. The insights of this study have also provided knowledge on how institutions can deal with inquisitive and angry audiences especially during tragedies that attract a lot of anger and condemnation. The study also empowers institutions on how to communicate the drastic measures intended to protect survivors' lives.

1.10 Scope of the Study

The scope of the study was divided into three sections; content scope, geographical scope and time scope

1.10.1 Content scope

This study was limited to assessing the role of social media in building a sustainable organizational corporate Image. The study focused on the role of X on sustaining KCCA's corporate image during a disaster like Kiteezi landfill collapse.

1.10.2 Geographical scope

The study was conducted at Kampala Capital Authority, focusing on the institution's use of social media particularly X to sustain its corporate image during the Kiteezi landfill collapse.

Therefore, the study was geographically limited to Kampala city where KCCA operates and where the crisis occurred.

1.9.3 Time scope

This study considered a period of 3 months that is from August 10 when the Kiteezi landfill disaster happened up to November 10 when KCCA officials who had been charged and remanded were granted bail.

1.9.4 Definition of key terms

Corporate image refers to how people outside the organisation such as customers, investors, government officials, and the wider public interpret and judge a company's behaviour, its operations, and its products or services (Liang et al., 2024). Organisations in competitive environments intentionally work to project a favourable image, while those that ignore this responsibility often face issues such as high staff turnover, loss of major clients, declining stock value, and strained stakeholder relations (Chaves et al., 2003). Because consumer trust heavily influences purchasing decisions, companies must focus on building their image through sound policies and transparent practices, a process that takes years to develop but can be destroyed quickly (Fill & Roper, 2012).

Social media consists of digital platforms that enable interactive communication, content creation, and information exchange among users in real time (Kakumba, 2021). In Uganda, platforms like X have become deeply embedded in everyday communication, with 3.4 million active users who increasingly rely on these tools to share updates and report events as they occur, reducing reliance on traditional media outlets such as newspapers or broadcast stations. As a result, social media has evolved into an essential resource for public engagement and information flow.

A sustainable corporate image refers to a lasting, positive organisational reputation built through continuous engagement, authenticity, and transparent communication, particularly through digital channels (Rijal, 2023). Today's modern communication landscape, social media enables organisations to shape and maintain this long-term image by interacting directly with residents, businesses, and government agencies, sharing timely updates, addressing public concerns, and

displaying their initiatives openly (Trang, 2021; Lutz & Hoffmann, 2014). Hence, active response to feedback and involving community members in decision-making processes, can aid organisations demonstrate attentiveness and adaptability. This strengthens public trust and reinforcing their corporate image over time (Rijal, 2023; Watson & Kitchen, 2015).

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW & THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.0 Introduction

Social media plays a countless role in determining any business image, so it is vital to invest in building a respectable social media existence. Customers now depend on social media to figure out their decisions and learn about businesses before making any purchase, (Faulds, 2009). With the thriving of the web particularly after the rise and spread of social media networks, people start to count on these systems to make their ordinary life picks including shopping and purchase decisions (Bernoff, 2011).

For the great impact these online networks in shaping customers' decisions and build their own views, it becomes crucial for organization to have a neat and significant presence on these networks and keep close to customers. Whether in physical or virtual world, every organization aims at building a good reputation and reflects a positive image to their customers (Palacios & Barrero, 2011). Online, social media platforms offer great opportunities to spread the word of mouth about businesses worldwide. That is why, social media networks become one of the important mediums on which brands are built.

2.1 Social Media Overview

Globally there were 5.24 billion social media users at the start of 2025 which translated into 63.9% of the world's total population (Kemp, 2025). Kemp adds that the growth of social media users has been enabled by the increase in accessibility and use of laptops and desktops making 61.5 of adults using the said devices. Nevertheless, mobile phones remain the most popular gadgets used to access social media and other digital spaces across all age groups (Kemp, 2025).

When it comes to the world's favorite social media platforms, Global World Information's latest data reveals that Instagram has now overtaken Facebook to claim second place in the worldwide rankings. It is a close call though: 14.8 percent of global internet users identify Instagram as their favorite platform, compared with 14.5 percent for Facebook. However, yet another Meta platform WhatsApp tops the global rankings, with 15.7 percent of working-age internet users

choosing the messenger app as their favorite social platform (Kemp, 2025; Kemp, 2023; Kemp, 2022).

Social media are computer-mediated tools that allow people, companies and other organizations to create, share, or exchange information, career interests, ideas, and pictures/videos in virtual communities and networks (Oluwasola, 2018). Government of Uganda through the National Information Technology Authority Publication of 2013 on the Social Media guide defines Social media as a set of online technologies, sites and practices that are used to segment opinions, skills and perceptions. Social media in this perspective is a discourse that occurs between Government and its citizens. This implies that the level of control presumed from traditional media is supplanted with a deeper level of engagement with the public. Social media is the use of web-based and mobile technologies to turn communication into interactive dialogue.

Kamugisha and Byaruhanga (2025) stress that social media has become so popular in Uganda and indispensable in human and organisation daily activities. Social media has become an integral part of modern society in Uganda (Kamugisha & Byaruhanga, 2025; Kakumba, 2021). Facebook, Instagram, X, YouTube and WhatsApp are some of the popular social media sites that are being used in Uganda. Uganda contributes 3.4 million active users with an annual growth of 900,000 users (Makanga & Kakumba, 2021). Social media has become more resourceful and users now use platforms such as X to practice citizen journalism (Kamugisha & Byaruhanga, 2025; Makanga & Kakumba, 2021).

According to National Information Technology Authority Uganda (NITA-U, 2020) report, social media has made people not to wait for the newspapers, radio stations or even television stations for news bytes because they are able to access almost every news worth event through social media and other digital spaces. NITA-U explains that several ICT infrastructural projects have been implemented in Uganda, even in the countryside. For example, the 4G broadband connectivity initiative supported by Facebook destined to heighten the speed of internet and the pace of its penetration in the Northern part of the country. The rate of access to and use of mobile phones now stands at over 85%, with about 21.9 million Ugandans now owning at least one mobile phone with the number of users of social media apps constantly growing. The falling costs of smartphones and data have greatly contributed to the increase and access of social media

in Uganda (NITA-U, 2020). Popular social media platforms, such as Facebook and X also provide a unique opportunity for e-government initiatives, specifically about communication between government institutions and citizens.

According to Ouma (2016), social media presents exciting opportunities for facilitating and creating a conducive platform for constructive dialogue thereby strengthening government responsiveness and deepening citizen engagement. Ouma adds that governments are increasingly leveraging social media to deliver better services to the public because they have interactive and innovative features, which aid communication and interaction among citizens and enable them to interact and collaborate with government in the delivery of public services.

The National e-government Framework (2010), affirms the Government of Uganda's strong belief that Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has the potential not only to revolutionize the way government operates, but also to enhance the relationship between Government and Citizens (G2C), Government and Business community (G2B) and within Government-to-Government departments (G2G). According to National Information Technology Authority (NITA-U, 2023) social media raises awareness of certain issues, build credibility with specific audience groups, engage the public on policy consultation, or as an internal communications tool to improve collaboration between government agencies or within a single agency. NITA-U further stresses that due to the significant rise and uptake of social media tools in Uganda, it has become necessary to consider social media in developing any modern, professional communications strategies especially within Government operational domains to sustain the corporate image (NITA-U, 2020).

2.2 Social Media, Government Entities

Throughout much of human history, there has been development of technologies that make it easier for us to communicate with each other (Lang et al., 2012). Emile Durkheim, a French sociologist known by many as the father of sociology, and Ferdinand Tonnies, a German sociologist, are considered pioneers of social networks during the late 1800s (Kapoor et al., 2018). Social networks have evolved over the years to the modern-day variety, which uses digital media. However, the social media is not that new. In addition, it did not start with the computer but instead the telephone. During the 1950s, phone phreaking the term used for the rogue

searching of the telephone network, began (Edosomwan et al., 2011). This process was accomplished through the use of homemade electronic devices that facilitated unauthorized access to the telephone system to make free calls. Phreaks were able to find telephone company test lines and conference circuits to complete their task. Ojukwu et al. (2021) were able to hack into corporate unused voice mailboxes to host the first blogs and podcasts.

Oluwasola (2018) explains that social media started out in the late 1990s as broadband, internet became popular (that is website that allowed users to create and upload content began to appear). The first social media network sites “six degree” appeared in 1997 and by late 2000s, social media gained widespread acceptance and some services gained huge numbers of users (Oluwasola, 2018). In the 2000s, many social networking sites emerged to ease interaction with people that share a common interest in music, education, and movies which also affected how organizations conducted their transactions (Timothy, 2019). Social media was defined as forms of electronic communication through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content (Timothy, 2019).

Kemp (2025) indicates that the growth in social media and Internet use has been witnessed worldwide, with over 5.56 billion people—equivalent to 67.9 percent of the global population—using the Internet as of early 2025. The report further shows that active social media users have reached 5.24 billion globally, underscoring the continuing expansion of online connectivity and digital engagement. This rapid growth has significant implications for communication, marketing, and public relations, as social media becomes an increasingly central platform for interaction and information exchange. Essoungou (2010) observes that Africans are leading what may be the next global trend—a major shift to mobile Internet use, with social media as its main drivers. He notes that when Africans go online, they spend much of their time on social media platforms such as Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), and YouTube. This early observation underscores Africa’s transition from limited desktop internet access to a predominantly mobile-based online culture, a trend that continues to define the continent’s digital landscape today.

Studies indicate that in sub-Saharan Africa, more than 70% of corporate organizations use at least two social media platforms and these have helped organizations gain competitive advantage through communicating information relating to products and services. Social media has been

useful for public organizations and NGOs in Africa to connect with an audience of potential beneficiaries, donors, government officials, and other people interested in supporting any positive cause. In the digital age, social media is transforming the way we engage at all levels and in all sectors. Many public and private organizations across the world have leveraged the role of social media sites to share information regarding the products and services they offer to their clients. This has ultimately improved corporate image of many organizations in the world (Hassan & Basit, 2020a). In light of the New Public Management thinking which drives investment in the public sector by prescribing ideas and practices using private sector and business approaches, governments around the world have also started paying considerable attention to using social media in many ways (Nabaho, 2015).

Social media has promoted interaction between citizens and public institutions (Roengtam, 2017). Roengtam conducted a study in Thailand where it was found that the use of social media has promoted interaction between citizens and government via government website which encourage change in internal government bureaucracy. A study conducted by Mwai et al. (2020) about Social Media and Service Delivery in government portals an Analysis of how Government of Kenya uses Social Media for service delivery, results indicated that mainly social media portals were being used for information dissemination and not to offer other services like public participation or transactional services. Thus, not used to obtain feedback to improve on service delivery. In a nutshell, the use of social media for example Facebook, X and Instagram has to be monitored and managed in order to provide feedback on service delivery if it is to maintain its corporate image.

Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA) is the Central Government body mandated to run the Kampala City. The institution has been in existence since 2011. KCCA provides a classic example of how social media can be used to expand the scope of citizen-government engagement while improving service delivery and public accountabilities at the same time. The highly appealing, interactive and instant feedback nature of social media made KCCA to adopt them as a communication strategy as soon as it was established in 2011. In addition to the key functions performed by KCCA, Public Relations is one of the vital roles in which the institution is committed to engage effectively with Citizens in a meaningful, accountable, responsive and equitable way (Nabaho, 2015).

Kampala Capital City Authority runs several Social Media platforms, which are produced and maintained 24/7 by KCCA digital communications team under Public and Corporate Affairs' Press Office. KCCA's Official Social Media channels include, Twitter Accounts; @KCCAUG, @KCCAED, @KCCASpox, @KlaCityFestival, @Visit Kampala, @KCCAFC, @KCCAESB and @Kampala4Climate. Facebook which is the most popular and utilized social media platform in Uganda has been closed by the government since 2020. This explains why the study focused on how KCCA uses X to sustain its corporate image. However, the study focused on KCCA's official X account known as @KCCAUG.

Research carried out in KCCA on the use of social media by (Achol, 2019) revealed that the use of social media resulted into greater transparency and accountability as many of the activities are posted on social media. This has in turn improved the trust of the KCCA management and leadership by many of the Kampala city dwellers. The constant use of social media by KCCA has also resulted into greater engagement of the city dwellers through interactive and instant platforms such as Twitter. Some of the feedbacks from the city dwellers through these platforms have been incorporated into city planning and administration hence improving the quality-of-service delivery by KCCA. The transparency and accountability provided on social media has helped in building and sustaining the corporate image of KCCA.

2.3 Corporate Image

In today's competitive environment, many companies need to project a strong and positive reputation to their stakeholders, namely the employees, consumers, investors and the public. This is made more difficult as each of the stakeholders relate differently to the company. According to Garbett (1988), companies must try to project an image that is stable yet exciting, aggressive, yet public-oriented, diversified yet focused on some specialized areas, and generous to employees yet shrewd in its investments. The ability to satisfy the needs of the different stakeholders helps to generate positive feelings towards the company.

The effect of social media in corporate image building is appraised from an effective corporate image building style, which gives room for assimilation between diverse media, higher innovation and development of inimitable services with stronger planning platform. Corporate image, describes the manner in which outsiders perceive a company, its activities, and its

products or services. According to Siamagka, (2011), Industry leaders and reputed corporate organizations protect their corporate image by maintaining high standards of practice regardless of other factors. The most admired organization use a combination of transparency, strong ethics and commitment to quality goods and services to build and maintain their image and reputation.

Davis et al. (2007) Corporate Image Management revealed that corporate image and reputation are built, maintained and enhanced by several elements, such as being part of the corporate strategy. Corporate organization often fail to achieve their desired image and reputations because of two primary factors, firstly the failure to identify a clear core competency of superiority that have little value to the intended audience and lastly continuing to do the same things that made the organization successful, despite the fact that these things are no longer relevant to the current situation.

2.3.1 Enhancing the Internal Image of the Company

Examining corporate image from the employees' perspective is important for several reasons. According to Riordan et al (1997), employees are essential to an organization's performance as their perceptions of corporate image are related to their work attitudes and behaviors, and an organization's image can affect organization performance. Image perception can greatly influence the actions of employees. This is because corporate image contributes to an employee's sense of self and they use image to gauge how outsiders are judging them. For example, if a company's image is deteriorating, it will set off corresponding actions from the employees to address the issue. Therefore, it is important that an organization sends positive signals to its employees and lets them judge for themselves the effectiveness of the organization in satisfying their interests.

Every social media user has some degree of social influence on other users (Vollenbroek et al., 2013). This is the reason why they are more easily trusted by others. The fact that social media enables customers to share their thoughts with as many as possible users, depending on the reach of their network, makes the impact on corporate reputation even bigger. Consumers are in a position to share their thoughts in real time status updates which might be supported by additional mash-up uses like picture, video, or website references makes their impact even stronger. The spread of a message is possible at the very moment the consumer is exposed to an experience with a company or product. Hence, it can directly influence the corporate reputation

of businesses. Additionally, social media is where organizations actual and potential customers are interacting, and it shapes how both segments think about a company (Kuvykaite, (2012). Therefore not only potential customers might be affected by corporate online reputation, but also existing customers might be encouraged to change their opinions about certain products or brands.

Since customers are empowered through social media and online reputation of companies exists it is likely that there is an influence on corporate reputation. There are diverse scientists that underline this relationship (Jones et al., 2009). Due to the ability to share thoughts about organizations customers can affect the corporate reputation of companies within the social media (Kaplan and Haenlein, (2009). These thoughts can either be positively or negatively related to the company. Moffit et al., (2001) express the same thoughts that negative voices within social media can damage a corporate reputation while positive voices can improve the corporate reputation. Due to consumer power stakeholders are in a position to reward good companies and punish bad companies (Lewis, 2001). Basically, this underlines that customers can choose one of two stances while revealing their thoughts online.

2.4 Strategies of Building a Sustainable Corporate Image on Social Media

An organization may need to start to develop the brand's reputation by recognizing its core purpose. The core purpose is the motive the company is in existence and does the work that it does, (Sugiyono 2002). Possessing a clear purpose that customers may support, aids the brand to unite with its target audience. Creating a connection makes it easier to market the brand's products or services to the target audience, (Chowdhury, 2011). Once the business has established what the core purpose of the business is, the company can demonstrate these values consistently throughout all of its work. The organization's branding and graphical features are an imperative influence on the company's image. These are stuff like the logo, tagline, colour palettes and brand name, (Rosmadi 2018). These tools help to communicate the organization's purpose. If an organization is making alterations to a business' image, it's better to think about how well the branding reveals the organization's ideals and the identity it aims to convey, Somerfield and Taylor (2013).

Forming a strong and positive image is significant that the business follows the values it supports. The values the business endorses might attract new customers, but practicing these values is essential for retaining these customers and continuing to attract more. Showing that the organization's actions align with its values is also important for building trust, Schultz & Peltier, (2013). Before publicizing company values, it's worthwhile to evaluate how closely company actions align with values, (Srirejeki, 2016). If there's a difference, it's wise to implement a plan for making behavior match the values. If the whole organization obeys to the business' image and values, it creates the image stronger and more authentic, so staff training could be necessary if the image and values are developing or changing, (Chiou, 2011). Training helps staff to appreciate the company' image and core values, which makes it easier for them to symbolize these in their work and conduct, (Pratama, 2012). If every person has a common understanding of the organizational image, it makes it easier to promote.

Taking part in activities that promote and align with organizational values can strengthen the image of the brand, (Melanthiou, 2012). This is especially true for public and media-related activities that have wide exposure. The way the business promotes itself and publicly presents itself can have a significant effect on developing public perception and increasing brand awareness, (Paquette, 2013). Creating a strong corporate image is vital that all the brand's communications and messaging is consistent. Businesses regularly share the official stance on particular issues or developments internally so that spokespeople and customer-facing employees all communicate consistent ideas, (Christodoulides, 2011). Conflicting or contradictory messages can damage the brand identity and create confusion. This means that keeping employees well informed and sharing the same messages is important for creating and maintaining a successful image, (Pane, 2014). Brands sometimes make mistakes and it's important to take ownership of these if you want to improve the company image. Taking responsibility for mistakes and correcting them helps you to earn trust from customers and can limit the damage to the company image that a mistake can cause, (Brown, 2010). If the organization starts a new policy or releases a new product that causes a negative reaction from customers, reversing the decision can have a positive impact on the brand image, (Wang, 2011). Doing this shows customers you're listening to them and want to meet their needs.

According to David, (2009), the quality of a company's customer service can have a significant impact on its image. This is because customer service is the most common way for customers to interact directly with the brand. It's important that customer service teams personify the brand's values and can deliver effective customer care. An experience with customer service has the potential to shape how someone feels about the company in either a positive or negative way, (Hastuti, 2017). If changing brand perception is important, it's worthwhile to assess customer service and makes improvements if necessary. For most businesses, their image changes over time and it's important that to keep the brand's website and social media accounts current to reflect this. Customers often make fast judgments when they first view the organization's website or social media accounts and this might also be the first time they notice the brand, (Singh, 2012). Keeping these platforms up to date ensures that customers get an accurate impression of the current company image. It's worth evaluating whether these channels give customers an accurate impression and deciding whether only small changes or a larger overhaul are necessary to make it more accurate, (Hajli, 2014).

2.4.1 The relationship between social media and Corporate Image sustainability

People use social media to chat, exchange opinions and talk about everything and anything. Invariably shopping is a popular topic and it is very common for users to offer opinions on products they buy or share their experiences with other users (Zhang, 2011). This of course affects a brand greatly and it is not difficult to see how a few negative stories can soon spread like wildfire across sites such as X and Facebook, thus negatively affecting brand and reputation, (Xiang, 2010).

Social media creates the new possibilities of interaction between the company and its customers, and changes the traditional communication model of one-to-many to the model many-to many. Communication in social media allows customers to respond to the messages sent by the company, to express their opinion and to communicate with other customers, (Lingelbach, 2009). Communication in social media is more complicated than in traditional media, because the customer response and intercommunication limit the company's possibilities to control the message content and manage communication, (Nguyen, 2011).

The success of company's communication in social media for image formation depends on preparation to communicate, because the management of new communication channels and

relations with target audiences in social media requires new skills. Though different authors (Palmer & Koenig-Lewis, 2009), provide recommendations how to use social media in business and how to create the strategy of social media communication, there is a lack of research, oriented to communication in social media management in the context of company's image formation. This therefore gives confirmation on the importance of forms of visual style expression, message themes, audience and company interaction, interaction within the audience, and company's internal communication in social media while developing company's image, (Brake, 2009).

Company's image is an attitude of an audience to it, which can be determined by experience of an audience and its interaction with company image, taking into account the experience of the audience, can be defined as positive, neutral or negative (Romero, 2011). With reference to (Breakenridge, 2009), there are three main directions for social media measurement: volume which is how many people talk, influence which is who talks, and sentiment looking at what people talk. Usefulness of social media communication can be seen by users' flow, evaluation and sharing of content, number of friends on company 's profile. The company's image in social media is easily reflected by the tone of users' comments: positive, neutral, negative, (Skerik, 2011). Based on measurement results, the company should identify the areas that need improvement. According to measurement results, the company might do some corrections in identity elements and social media communication strategy.

Communication decisions are defined by communication goals. Some authors (Tuten, 2008; Romero, 2011) provide recommendations for using social media in business and creation of social media communication strategy. Still, there is a lack of empirical studies in the field of social media communication management in the context of image formation. (Gilpin 2010) analyzed the role of different social media channels for company's image formation. The results showed that organizations, which participate in high interactivity modules, such as micro blogs, should be ready to react quickly and flexible, because consumers have more power to manage communication here than they have in more controlled channels, such as news portals and blogs, Shah, (2011). However, more deep analysis of how to transfer the desirable company's image through social media channels, is still missing. The authors of this article try to make their input into this area presenting their research results.

2.4.2 Information sharing and sustainable corporate image

Information sharing on social media can profoundly impact corporate image, influencing how a company is perceived by customers, stakeholders, and the public. This section will explore the ways in which information sharing on social media affects corporate image, considering both positive and negative aspects, as well as strategies for managing information effectively to enhance corporate reputation (Hassan & Basit, 2020a). Positive information sharing on social media can enhance corporate image in several ways. When companies share informative and engaging content, such as product updates, industry insights, or behind-the-scenes stories, it demonstrates transparency, expertise, and authenticity. Positive information sharing can position a company as a thought leader in its industry, fostering trust and credibility among customers and stakeholders (Sancilio, 2014). For example, a technology company sharing articles on emerging trends in artificial intelligence or hosting webinars on cyber security best practices can establish itself as a trusted authority, enhancing its reputation as an innovative and knowledgeable industry leader.

Moreover, positive information sharing can strengthen brand identity and foster emotional connections with customers (Erhard, 2023). When companies share stories, testimonials, or user-generated content that resonate with their target audience, it humanizes the brand, evokes positive emotions, and builds brand loyalty. For instance, a clothing retailer sharing customer photos wearing its products or stories of how its products have positively impacted customers' lives can foster a sense of community and belonging, enhancing its image as a brand that cares about its customers and their experiences. On the other hand, negative information sharing on social media can have detrimental effects on corporate image (Cai, 2022). When companies share misleading, inaccurate, or controversial content, it can erode trust, damage reputation, and alienate customers. Negative information sharing can lead to public backlash, boycotts, and reputational crises, causing long-term harm to a company's image and bottom line. For example, a food company sharing false health claims about its products or engaging in insensitive or offensive marketing campaigns can face widespread criticism and damage to its brand reputation (Hassan & Basit, 2020b).

2.4.3 Feedback on social media and sustainable corporate image

Social media can help improve a company's reputation by monitoring and responding quickly to customer complaints or feedback (Jumalik & Paramadina, 2024b). Feedback on social media has become increasingly influential in shaping corporate image, as platforms like Facebook, X, and Instagram serve as virtual town squares where customers express opinions, share experiences, and interact with brands (Jumalik & Paramadina, 2024b). Positive feedback on social media can be a boon for corporate image. When customers share glowing reviews, testimonials, or photos of their experiences with a brand, it serves as powerful social proof, bolstering credibility and trustworthiness (Kooyman, 2016). Positive feedback showcases a brand's strengths, highlighting its commitment to quality, customer service, and innovation (Jumalik & Paramadina, 2024b)

Negative feedback on social media can pose challenges to corporate image. Complaints about product defects, poor service, or unethical behavior can spread quickly and damage brand reputation (Becker et al., 2013). Negative feedback can erode trust, deter potential customers, and even trigger reputational crises if mishandled. For instance, a clothing retailer facing backlash on social media for using sweatshop labor may experience boycotts and public outrage, leading to long-term damage to its image and bottom line (Jumalik & Paramadina, 2024b). Effective management of social media feedback is crucial for maintaining a positive sustainable corporate image. Prompt and transparent responses to customer concerns demonstrate accountability and responsiveness, signaling to stakeholders that the brand values their feedback and is committed to addressing issues (Becker et al., 2013).

2.4.4 Crisis communication

When crises such as the Kiteezi landfill collapse occur, it is important for an organisation to remain agile, organised and prepared, leverage organisational strengths and look for support from within its networks (UNCCT, 2017). This is because crisis communication requires strategic communication, which helps to support social cohesion and through the recovery stages. Developing strategic communication enables providing of accurate, timely and sensitive information and messages, which can address or prevent misinformation, provide leadership and bring communities together (UNCCT, 2017). When an organisation has the right systems and procedures, it can keep a tight grip on communications, though it requires having the right

expertise, procedures and roles in place before the crisis (Lindberg, 2008). According to UNCCT (2017), communication is an integral part of any organization, and managers and emergency management coordinators must always be well prepared. Crisis communication requires coordination, cooperation and a great deal of internal communication. It is therefore important to involve as many people as possible in your crisis communications plans (UNCCT, 2017; Lindberg, 2008). Lindberg emphasises that when responsibilities have been delegated, the tasks can be carried out in smaller groups. However, when crisis communication procedures and methods are developed, they should not only be documented but should be practice regularly purposely to ensure that everyone involved can function under stress (Lindberg, 2008). This ensures that the right people receive the right messages at the right time from a trusted source and this helps to combat eroding trust and encourage the positive, rather than negative behaviours. The arguments made by UCCT and Lindberg imply crisis communication should be activated when there is concern for community health and safety above that of seasonal expectations.

2.4.5 Research Gap

During crises such as the Kiteezi landfill collapse, the public tends to utilise social media to express their experiences and to get to know what is ongoing (Eriksson et al., 2016; Austin et al., 2012). For instance Austin et al. (2012) argue that people use social media to find out more about ongoing situations and this argument was supported by Eriksson et al. (2016) who conducted a study about the usage of X (formerly Twitter) and Facebook in crisis situations and established that the two mediums are popular in crisis situations like Kiteezi landfill collapse.

Unlike in the past where corporate image was largely controlled by mainly legacy media, today's public has all forms of digital and social media platforms to express their opinions according to Phillips and Young (2017) and this has left corporate organisations with very limited means to contain information. This is because the public has fulltime access to globally popular social media platforms such as Facebook and X. However, Wigley and Fontenot (2010) in their study focusing on the influence of social media on crisis management organisations found that social media platforms are the medium of choice in managing crises among many organisations. Nevertheless, Wigley & Fontenot's cross

section survey only relied on data from company employees and ignored social media users who would have provided vital data. However, this study's second objective closes this gap by examining social media users' reaction on KCCA's posts on X about Kiteezi landfill collapse.

The above literature highlights the growing use of social media by government agencies for purposes of transparency, accountability, and citizen engagement (Achol, 2019; Kamugisha & Byaruhanga, 2025; NITA-U, 2020). But the studies remain limited on empirical investigation regarding how these social media platforms actually contribute to sustaining the corporate image of public institutions during crises like Kiteezi landfill collapse. Largely the studies listed above focus on information dissemination but not understanding what it entails to sustain an organisation's corporate image using social media. Therefore this study has addressed this gap by providing insights on how public entities such as KCCA use social media platforms like X to sustain corporate image during a crisis.

The studies reviewed provide guidance on how organisations can use social media to communicate effectively (Palmer & Koenig-Lewis, 2009; Romero, 2011; Brake, 2009). However there is insufficient research examining how the management of social media directly influences corporate image formation in practice. The literature recognizes that image building on social media depends on factors such as visual style, message themes, audience engagement, and internal communication processes (Romero, 2011; Skerik, 2011), yet empirical studies linking these communication components to measurable corporate image outcomes remain scarce. Additionally, Gilpin (2010) further emphasizes that organizations using high interactivity platforms like microblogs must respond quickly and flexibly, but deeper examination of how such practices shape desired corporate image is still missing. Thus this study has addressed the gap that was existing in understanding how specific communication management decisions on social media translate into sustained corporate image for public-sector organizations.

However much as the studies in the literature acknowledge that feedback on social media significantly influences corporate reputation both positively and negatively (Kooyman, 2016; Becker et al., 2013; Jumalik & Paramadina, 2024b) there is limited research investigating how government institutions such as KCCA manage such feedback to sustain their corporate image.

The negative feedback and user influenced criticism can swiftly destroy a brand (Moffit et al., 2001; Zhang, 2011), yet empirical studies on how public entities in Uganda respond to these dares remain underdeveloped. Therefore, this study has addressed the gap concerning the link between social media feedback, crisis communication practices and maintenance of corporate image within government institutions.

2.5 Theoretical Framework

This study was anchored on Theory of Corporate Image (TCI) and Technology Determinism Theory (TDT). These theories were chosen because they supplement each other in strengths and weaknesses. They were thus pivotal in study exploring corporate image sustainability during challenging times like the Kiteezi landfill collapse which tested KCCA's corporate image.

2.5.1 Theory of corporate image

This theory was adopted for this study because it elaborates that an organization's public image obtained through its communication and actions determines how the public responds to its information (Van Riel, 1995; Abratt, 1989). However, it is crucial to note that public response to an organisation's information is largely influenced by the presented facts but strongly rotate on the public existing perceptions and attitudes toward the company, or institution (Christensen & Askegaard, 2001; Balmer, 1995). The corporate image theory explains that, corporate image translated from the company's identity (what the organization is), and is created using the perception of corporate identity projected in the hope of influencing purchase intention, the willingness to invest, or the desire to work in the company (Balmer, 1995; Van Riel, 1995). In addition, the theory focuses on how organisations manage and project their image to various stakeholders. It considers how this image influences perceptions, behaviors, and relationships with stakeholders (Balmer, 1999). Abratt (1989) maintains that organizations "need to make a concerted effort to manage their corporate images because corporate image management is the key to gaining and keeping public trust. The researcher affirms the requisite of differentiating between the functional meaning of a company's image (tangible assets of quality, reliability, services, and prices) and its sensitive denotation. Many researchers have noted the importance of image, concluding that image influences the way in which people perceive, and react to, certain things (Christensen and Askegaard, 2001). Image targets and creating the personality of a

company or product through inclinations and positive attitudes or negative links and avoidance tendencies. The researchers conclude by stating that, image is a powerful means of communicating with people to entice them to act in a meaningful way, and today image management at the strategic and tactical level of marketing and management is seen as a tool with growing potential (Lee, 2021).

Furthermore, it is important to note that one of the methods in developing corporate image is through corporate personality. Eventually, corporate personality is developed through metaphors, and they are “the recognition of human features to non-human things and events” (Freling& Forbes, 2005). They are often used to describe a brand, product, an organization or even retailers to facilitate better understanding of those entities (Davies et al., 2001). Furthermore, metaphors can be utilized to form mental pictures to replace thousands of words (Sackmann, 1989), assist in the process of enhancing the likelihood of achieving new insights of problem-solving (Proctor, 1989), and translate subjective matters into new meanings which are explicable by bringing in alternative paradigms (Arndt, 1985). More importantly, images have been successfully developed to explain employees’ and customers’ views of organizations (Slaughter et al., 2004, Davies et al., 2004), which obviously reflect corporate image. Interestingly Tran et al. (2015) mentioned that corporate image and corporate personality interact with each other in a manner that corporate image describes the aspects of corporate personality and vice versa.

The corporate image theory is related to this study in that it is premised on image, which influences the way in which people perceive, react to certain things and powerful means of communicating to the public to attract them to act in a meaningful way. In this regard, it is definite that a consumer/ stakeholder perception of an institutional image has a direct positive impact on the Organizational legitimacy.

Strengths & weakness of Corporate Image theory

The theory of Corporate Image provides a strong conceptual framework for understanding how organisations project and manage their image to stakeholders (Balmer, 1999). This is relevant to the objectives of the study of examining how organizations, KCCA in this case, use social media to build and sustain their corporate image. The conceptual framework will help in systematically investigating the various aspects of Corporate Image, such as reputation and identity thus aiding

in comprehending the complex interplay of elements that contribute to a sustainable corporate image on social media platforms.

Furthermore, the theory inherently adopts a stakeholder centric perspective. Organizations interact with diverse audiences in the context of social media, and the theory provides a solid foundation for investigating how different stakeholders perceive and respond to an organization's social media presence. The researcher will investigate the complexities of these stakeholder relationships and determine how social media platforms influence stakeholder perceptions (Fombrun, 2007).

However, the theory of Corporate Image has its weakness which include: One of the weaknesses of the theory of Corporate Image is that there is limited emphasis on technology. This means that it may not clearly elaborate the role of technology, in this case social media platforms, in shaping an organization's corporate image (Van Riel, 2007). While it provides insights into corporate image management, it may not adequately address how specific technological advancements and social media platforms affect image construction and management (Żywiołek, 2021). The study's objective of examining social media factors that affect the organization's corporate image may necessitate a more nuanced understanding of technological factors. Thus, the researcher considers using the theory of technological determinism to analyze the technological factors.

Additionally, the theory's static nature may come off as a weakness because of the fact that it may not fully capture the dynamic and rapidly evolving nature of social media (Balmer, 1999). Since the study focuses on the role of social media, this might come off as a challenge as these platforms and trends change frequently. In the context of social media, a Corporate Image may not remain the same over time. Social media technologies are constantly evolving, and a theory that ignores this dynamic nature may limit its applicability to understanding the impact of technology on corporate image.

In conclusion, much as the Theory of Corporate Image provides useful insights on how organizations project and manage their image, it has both strengths and weaknesses in the context of the study's objectives. To address these shortcomings and improve the theory's relevance to the study, the researcher considered combining it with other theories, such as Technological determinism to analyze the technological factors and address its applicability to social media contexts.

2.5.2 Technological Determinism Theory (TDT)

This theory suitably explains social media and its adoption in this digital era in the public relations sphere (Ngwu & Anioke, 2020). TDT is applicable to this study because digital companies such as Google, Apple, Facebook and Amazon have made substantial efforts to present themselves as leading the fabric of socio-technical development, thereby disregarding the complexities of media change and integrating popular histories of technology within their corporate identity and history (Natale, 2019). TDT can help unveil how deterministic narratives are appropriated by corporate groups to achieve similar objectives. The theory states that media technology shapes how we as individuals in a society think, feel, act, and how society operates as we move from one technological age to another (Ngwu & Anioke, 2020). The theory was developed by Marshall McLuhan in (1962) and it suggests that technology shapes and controls society and human behaviour. TDT argues that technology is the driving force behind social and economic change, and that society adapts to the technology that is available to it (Ngwu & Anioke, 2020).

Hauer (2017) notes that one of the assumptions of TDT is that technology is an autonomous force, meaning that it has a life of its own and is not shaped by social or economic factors. According to this view, technology shapes society and culture, rather than the other way around (Hauer, 2017). Critics of TDT note that it is overly simplistic and fails to take into account the complex ways in which technology and society interact. They argue that technology is not a neutral force, but rather is shaped by social and economic factors, and that technology can be used in different ways depending on the context in which it is used (Ngwu & Anioke, 2020; Hauer, 2017).

Some also argue that technological determinism is a form of technological fatalism, as it suggests that we are powerless to resist the effects of technology on society and culture, and that we must simply accept the changes that technology brings (Ngwu & Anioke, 2020; Hauer, 2017).

According to Hallström (2020), TDT doesn't consider the fact that the relationship between technology and society is more complex and interactive. Technology does shape society and culture, but society and culture also shape technology. It is important to note that we learn and feel and think the way we do because of the messages we receive through the current technology

that is available (Hallström, 2020; Hauer, 2017). These cite examples of the radio that required humans to only listen and develop our sense of hearing. While television engages both human hearing and visual senses, yet the Internet and social media offers us information anywhere and anytime with just a click or touch. We then transfer those developed senses into our everyday lives (Hallström, 2020; Oluwuyi, 2008).

Ngwu and Anioke (2020) observed that new media change the information distribution as citizens are not only consuming information but are now part of the information generation and dissemination. It should be recalled that one of the uniqueness of the social media in this century is that it makes citizens not only consumers but also producers of media contents and they are now part of the agenda setters which used to be shaped by the mass media experts before (Hallström, 2020; Hauer, 2017; Ngwu & Anioke, 2020). This theory is very relevant to this research because people now use the internet and particularly social media for different activities such as gossiping, news, interaction, entertainment, socializing, and product endorsement and so on.

Strengths of technological determinism

One critical strength of technological determinism theory is its clear focus on technology as a driving force for societal change (Holbrook, 2021). It emphasizes how technological innovations shape the way people think, behave, and interact, thereby influencing social structures and institution (Țicău & Hadad, 2023).

Technological Determinism Theory provides a structured framework for analyzing the relationship between technology and society (Holbrook, 2021). Even if criticized for oversimplification or determinism, its framework can still offer valuable insights into how social media technologies influence organizational communication strategies and public perception. Despite criticisms of oversimplification (Țicău & Hadad, 2023), the theory's emphasis on historical context can be beneficial for understanding the evolution of social media platforms and their impact on organizational communication practices. Examining this historical context can provide a foundation for understanding the current dynamics and informing future strategies.

Though criticized for neglecting agency and social context, Technological Determinism Theory's focus on structural analysis can still illuminate how social media platforms shape communication

dynamics (Finley, 2021). By examining the affordances and constraints of social media technologies, researchers can identify patterns and trends that influence organizational image management. Despite criticisms of determinism, the theory offers predictive potential by highlighting technological tendencies and their societal impacts (Dotson, 2015). Understanding these tendencies can help researchers anticipate future trends in social media usage and their implications for corporate image management, enabling proactive strategy development.

While not exhaustive on its own, Technological Determinism Theory can complement other theoretical perspectives in the study of social media and organizational communication (Muljono et al., 2017). By integrating insights from alternative theories, researchers can develop a more comprehensive understanding of the complex dynamics at play, enriching the analysis of corporate image-building efforts. Despite criticisms, the study can critically examine the assumptions and limitations of Technological Determinism Theory (Fellow, 2018). By acknowledging its shortcomings and exploring alternative perspectives, researchers can ensure a nuanced and balanced analysis of the role of social media in organizational image management.

Criticisms of technological determinism

Like environmental determinism, technological determinism overlooks the role that human free will plays in the use of technology. Any technology can have an impact on human society only in relation to the human will to use it, and the human will to submit to its influence, (Anaeto, 2008). For instance, while the internet and smartphones are ushering in a technological revolution, many people are choosing to undergo what is popularly known as “digital detox” or a willful avoidance of technology. The shortcoming of this theory is that McLuhan does not address the process of technological innovation, despite the fact that this very process of innovation provides the explanation of how various technologies come to be constructed, (Onabanjo, 2008). Media technologies are invented, created, and deployed by man. Thus, there is a control factor that determines to a certain degree their use and their potential effect.

Critics of technological determinism argue that counts more than technical features are social and political issues concerning and the circumstances of production, modes of use, values, purposes, skill, style, choice, control and access, or as Finnegan puts it, who uses it, who controls it, that it is used for, how it fits into the power structure, how) widely it is distributed, (Finnegan, 1988). We need to consider such issues as political control, class interests, economic

pressures, geographical access, educational background and general attitudes. Power, control, relations of production, conflict and ideology tend to be the key issues.

Social construction of technology also referred to as SCOT is a theory within the field of science and technology studies (or Technology and society). Advocates of SCOT that is social constructivists argue that technology does not determine human action but that rather, human action shapes technology, (CiCso, 2015). They also argue that the ways in which technology is used cannot be understood without understanding how that technology is embedded in its social context. SCOT is a response of technological determinism and is sometimes known as technological constructivism.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0. Introduction

Research methodology means the approach a researcher uses to explain the study problem (Swarooprani, 2022). The author adds that methodology is the methodical, theoretical examination of the procedures well-designed to a field of study and this comprises the hypothetical analysis of the body of methods and ethics associated with a branch of information. The importance of research methodology is that it helps to not only appreciate the products of scientific question but the development itself because it aims to explain and examine methods, pitch light on their restrictions and resources (Swarooprani, 2022). Therefore, this chapter covers the Research approach, research design, study approach, study population, sample size determination, sampling technique, sampling of the respondents, sampling of the posts, data collection methods, content analysis, in-depth interviews, data collection tools, interview guide, coding sheet, data processing analysis, gender consideration, ethical considerations and study limitations.

3.1 Research Approach

This study was approached using qualitative research methods. This is because the qualitative approach aims to address societies' scientific and practical issues and involve naturalistic and interpretative approaches to different subject matters (Taherdoost, 2022). Since qualitative methods focus on the way to do things and the outcome of task, the researcher undertook a case study titled: *The Role of social media in Building a Sustainable Organizational Corporate Image: A Case Study of Kampala Capital City Authority During Kiteezi Landfill Collapse*, which led to in-depth understanding of the problem and motivations not defined or described using numbers (Aspers, 2019; Goertzen, 2017). Undertaking qualitative research helps the researcher to collect primary, first-hand, textual data and analyze it using specific interpretive methods (Aspers, 2019). It helps to discover new insights, ideas, and generate new theories (Taherdoost, 2022).

3.2 Research Design

Baxter and Jack (2010) describe a study design as an approach to research that facilitates exploration of a phenomenon within its context using a variety of data sources. A case study design helps the researcher gain comprehensive understanding of the subject, topic or phenomenon and it leads to generating new theories or insights (Coombs, 2022). A case study design aids collections of data using various means that could include interviews, focus groups, field notes, documents, autobiographies, historical documents, videos, and more (Coombs, 2022).

Cope (2015) and Lindvall (2007) write that case study research is flexible but intensive since it involves in-depth study of few units with multiple variables. Case study research is intensive because it deals with getting a complete picture possible of a situation, a phenomenon or event (Cope, 2015, Lindvall, 2007 & Jacobsen, 2002). With case study research, the focus is put on a given unit, which could be an individual, a group, an organization or a local community which makes it more appropriate when seeking to understand the interaction between a specific context and a phenomenon (Jacobsen, 2002).

A case study allows in-depth multifaceted exploration of complex phenomenon in its real life setting (Brunelle et al., 2023) and it helps the researcher attain the goals of why, what and how questions (Heal, 2017). A case study design enables a researcher to closely examine the data within a specific context by selecting small geographical area or a very limited number of individuals as the subjects of study (Zainal, 2016, 2007). Because case studies explore and investigate contemporary real-life phenomenon through detailed contextual analysis of a limited number of events or conditions, the researcher reviewed KCCA's X posts in terms of texts, images and other visuals to assess how the organization engaged its public in bid to sustain its corporate image. But also interviews with a limited number of respondents were conducted in order to collect detailed information regarding what determines the messages KCCA posts on X in a bid to engage its public and sustain its corporate image.

3.3 Study Area

The study was conducted at Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA), a central government body mandated to run Kampala City. The current structure of leadership that incorporates political and technical wings was put in place by KCCA Act, 2010, though its functionality officially started in 2011. According to Uganda National Bureau of Statistics, Kampala City has a population of 1.8 residents (UBOS, 2024). UBOS adds that Kampala has a population of more than 2.5 million people during day time. These statistics give a glimpse of what KCCA's political and technical leadership is in charge of.

3.4 Study population

The population of the study is more than 1000 employees at Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA) located at City Hall at Nakasero hill. These include politicians elected or appointed as councilors, Lord Mayor, and ministers. They also include members of the technical wing headed by KCCA executive director, directors and staff of departments of health, education, physical planning, urban planning, legal, and corporate affairs. The study population also included the 335,000 followers of KCCA's X handled @KCCAUG. This was according to Msughter, (2024), research study population refers to a group of class of subjects, variables, concepts, or phenomena from which a sample to be studied is drawn. More so, Shukla, (2020) defines study population as all people or items with the characteristic one wishes to understand which may be tangible or intangible.

3.5 Sample Size

KCCA's communication department has a total of 38 staff members who, among these, 10 draft messages for X, collect data from public responses on KCCA's X page, ensure smooth running of the X page and also ensure that there is sufficient and reliable internet for robust social media communication. The department of sanitation under the Directorate of Public Health has 25 staff of which only nine are in charge communication services including social media. This makes the total number of participants from which the study was collected to be 63. The researcher had intended to engage at least 10 participants from the Public and Corporate Affairs (PCA) department and 10 participants from the department of sanitation hence making a total of 20

participants. However, PCA allowed only seven (07) of its staff to participate while the Directorate of Public Health authorized only the Manager Sanitation and Health Inspection to participate as an interviewee. Thus, the researcher had a study sample of only eight (08) participants. The sample size determination is the mathematical estimation of the number of subjects/units to be included in a study and this must not be too small or too large (Kaur, 2021). According to Kaur, when the sample size is too small even if the study was well conducted, it may fail to answer its research questions, and it may fail to detect important effect or associations. Similarly, when the sample is too large, it becomes time consuming, and resource constraint, and it could result into loss of accuracy (Kaur, 2021). However, the researcher was convinced that a sample size of eight (08) was not too small neither too big to arrive at meaningful conclusions.

3.6 Sampling technique

3.6.1 Sampling technique for in-depth interviews

The researcher applied purposive sampling for the in-depth interviews. This is because the researcher wanted only KCCA staff in communication and health departments because they were directly involved in communicating to the public regarding the Kiteezi landfill collapse in order to sustain the institution's corporate image. Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling technique that is effective when the researcher aims to study a specific domain within the participant pool (Dolores & Tongco, 2017). The respondents for in-depth interviews were drawn from KCCA's departments that is; Public and Corporate Affairs (PCA) and Public Health which directly engage the public through the mainstream media and social media for purposes of maintaining the institution's corporate image. For one to qualify as respondent for in-depth interview they had to meet the following criteria: History of active engagement with digital media platforms, specific experiences related to the study's focus, or any other characteristics that align with the research goals.

3.6.2 Sampling technique for content analysis

For content analysis, the researcher considered a period of three months that from August 10, 2024 to November 10, 2024. This period was selected because it was when KCCA became a

huge topic in the media and public discourse after Kiteezi landfill collapsed leaving approximately 35 people dead. As a result, KCCA was expected to keep a constant reaction or response to residents' or public's inquiries which included updates on number of people who had been rescued, number of bodies that had been retrieved, what was next regarding garbage management since Kiteezi could no longer be used, and investigations regarding who had not done what to protect citizens. Hence, the researcher only picked out messages linked to Kiteezi landfill collapse.

3.6.3 Sampling the respondents

Initially, the researcher aimed to conduct in-depth interviews with at least 20 staff members from the Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA), specifically those working in departments such as Public and Corporate Affairs (PCA) and Public Health, which played key roles in disseminating information during the Kiteezi landfill collapse. However, during the data collection phase, only eight officials were available for interviews; seven from the PCA department and one from the Public Health department. The Health Department delegated a single representative who was the Manager Sanitation and Health Inspection, arguing that all members were likely to provide similar responses. They further noted that the Director Health Department was not in office at the time of conducting interviews and they did not want to have very many people speaking which could have caused contradiction or confusion. Hence, one interviewee was deemed sufficient on their part. The PCA also indicated that seven interviewees were enough because they too did not want to have too many participants which could also have caused regurgitation of the same message. All interviews were conducted in person at the KCCA offices, within the respective workplaces of the respondents. The interviews were held on different days, as detailed in the table below.

Composition of respondents

Number of Respondent	Title/Designation	Interview Venue	Interview Date
Respondent 1	Officer Media Relations	Office, KCCA	20 th /5/2025
Respondent 2	Communication and Media Relations Officer	Office, KCCA	20 th /5/2025
Respondent 3	Officer Service and Protocol	Office, KCCA	26 th /5/2025
Respondent 4	Marketing Officer	Office, KCCA	26 th /5/2025
Respondent 5	Supervisor Communication and Media Relations	Office, KCCA	26 th /5/2025
Respondent 6	Head Public and Corporate Affairs	Office, KCCA	26 th /5/2025
Respondent 7	Communication and Media Relations	Office, KCCA	20 th /5/2025
Respondent 8	Manager Health Inspection & Sanitation	Office, KCCA	19 th /5/2025

3.6.4 Sampling the posts

Using twitter advanced search, the researcher extracted 41 posts from @KCCAUG X account posted from 10th August when the Kiteezi landfill collapse happened to 10th November. This was the period when KCCA technical wing leaders including the then Executive Director Dorothy Kisaka were arrested, charged and later released on court bail over negligence charges. It was realised that majority (29) of the posts on @KCCAUG X handle were posted during the month of August mostly in the period between 10th when the Kiteezi landfill collapse happened and 31 when the search and rescue operations were officially called off.

The most viewed, commented on and shared comment on @KCCAUG X handle was that posted on August 10th announcing the Kiteezi landfill collapse. It had 30 comments of which majority were in form of expressing anger, blame, insults and demands for KCCA leadership to resign or be arrested. Below is KCCA's August 10th tweet and public reaction

@KCCAUG August 10: “The Kampala Capital City Authority Landfill in Kiteezi has had a structural failure in waste mass this morning resulting in a collapsed section of the landfill. The level of damage is still being assessed. However, no fatalities have been recorded at this time. Our teams, along with other government agencies are on ground taking the necessary measures to ensure the area is secure and to prevent any further incidents. We are closely monitoring the situation to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the community. We will update you because this is a developing story.

Public reaction sample

@kajosh. “sheer incompetence yo exhibiting, lives lost and many more to come as we approach rainy seasons, the deplorable state of roads to kitezi, if I were you I would declare this a disaster and resettle all people around this place as you move waste to a new city landfill.”

@KiwanukaMoses11 “Studies were made on the slope stability of that landfill but I doubt whether you took time to read them. You guys have a research department in a restmood.”

@Engnassernsimbe Script. “Pot bellied men n women will be on site donning reflectors..They will promise safe disposal practices and compensation to the victims in loud voices..Bamale babule ppaka nga tragedy endala eguddewo!”

@KatakwiGuy “Why are you still dumping at a landfill that got full in 2014? You secured a new site in dundu mukono but because of big shots residing around it, you have been stopped from moving away from kitezi. Untreated leachate from kitezi is contaminating water catchments en u know it.”

3.7 Data collection methods

The researcher started with qualitative content analysis and later on moved to in-depth interviews which acted as responses to the former's findings. This was in line with arguments that a researcher should recognize that data collection is the process of gathering and measuring

information on variables of interest, in an established systematic fashion that enables one to answer stated research questions, test hypotheses, and evaluate outcomes (Kabir, 2016). It is also important to note that the goal for data collection is to capture quality evidence that translates to rich data analysis and allows the building of a convincing and credible answer to questions that have been posed (Kabir, 2016). Also, the researcher should bear in mind that accurate data collection is essential to maintaining the integrity of research and this includes selection of appropriate data collection instruments and clearly delineated instructions for their correct use reduce the likelihood of errors occurring (Kaur, 2021; Kabir, 2016). Therefore, the researcher applied in-depth interviews and content analysis to collect sufficient data that answers the three research objectives.

3.7.1 Content Analysis

It is defined as a method of researching communication patterns by focusing on words, subjects, and concepts in image, videos and texts (Yoshimi, 2016). The researcher employed content analysis to find out about the purposes, messages and effects of communication content (Fayzulloeva, 2020). The researcher reviewed images, press statements, text and videos posted on KCCA's X from August 10 to November 10, 2024. This was done to provide answers to the first research objective which examined the strategies KCCA employed to sustain its corporate image on X during Kiteezi landfill collapse. The reaction tweets on KCCA's Kiteezi landfill collapse tweets were extracted for purposes of getting answers for research objective two which examined how the public reacted to information shared on KCCA's X page during Kiteezi landfill collapse. This period was selected because KCCA made local and international news headlines due to Kiteezi landfill collapse, which left approximately 35 people dead. Following the Kiteezi tragedy, KCCA was forced to keeping a constant response to public inquiries on issues like number of people who had been rescued alive, bodies retrieved, people who were meant to be evacuation from staying near the scene and also managing garbage which was piling in the city centre every day. The researcher developed a coding sheet with dimensions such as date and time when a post was made, message in the post for instance health, security, infrastructure, business, appreciations, and the format which includes video, image, text or both.

Additionally, the coding sheet (*see Appendix i*) had variables assessing how much KCCA's posts were reacted to by the public. Here, the focus was on likes, views, reposts, and comments. This was used to assess what was the message in the public responses like, appreciation, raising concern, calling for help or intervention, expression of anger or expression of doubts in KCCA's social media communication. There several advantages of content analysis that include providing systematic and objective insights into textual data patterns, enabling efficient analysis of large volumes of text and allows for the identification of recurring themes, sentiments, and keywords, aiding in the generation of valuable insights across various fields (Fayzulloeva, 2020).

3.7.1.1 Population sample for content analysis

The researcher extracted 41 total posts on KCCA's X page in the recorded time scope which started on August 10, 2024 to November 10, 2024. These post as earlier explain were gathered or extracted using X advanced search. All the 41 posts were subjected to qualitative content analysis using the dimensions mentioned in section 3.6.2. The dominant dimensions were transformed into themes which presented alongside in-depth interview responses. For instance, the first post made on August 10, was a press release and dimension of the target audience was found to be the general public because KCCA was informing everyone about the tragedy that had befallen.

3.7.2 In-depth Interviews

The researcher interviewed 08 KCCA's staff in charge of social media content posted on the institution's official X handle. These were from the departments of Public and Corporate Affairs (PCA) and Public Health respectively. The in-depth interviews gave direct, straightforward and rich data. In-depth interviews involved conducting intensive individual interviews with respondents at separate intervals. This helped the researcher to explore their perspectives on using social media to build a sustainable corporate image for an institution like KCCA especially during a tragedy like the Kiteezi landfill collapse. This was in-line with Boyce and Neale (2015) argument that in-depth interviews require making prior arrangements with the respondents, the researcher introduced herself to KCCA officials using an introductory letter provided by Makerere University's Journalism Department. However, the KCCA leadership demanded an

interview request letter written by the researcher herself and this was obliged to. These interviews were vital in providing data for research objective one and three.

3.8 Data Collection Tools

Data collection tools are devices or instruments used to collect data which could be interviews, checklists, observation and questionnaires (Taherdoost, 2022). For this study, the researcher utilized Interview Guide and Coding Sheet to collect data.

3.8.1 Interview Guide

An interview guide consists of questions, topics or a combination that run from unstructured to highly structured (Smulowitz, 2017). The researcher applied unstructured interviews which had open ended questions and were flexible to support exploration of the topic in depth. This allowed the conversation flow naturally since there were no strict structure and it was for purposes of gaining rich, detailed insights into the subject with less influence from the interviewer's preconceived notion (Smulowitz, 2017). The interview guide collected data for research objective one which examined the strategies KCCA employed to sustain its corporate image on X during Kiteezi landfill collapse and research objective three which explored the challenges KCCA encountered in its efforts to sustain corporate image using X during Kiteezi garbage collapse. The researcher had unstructured interview guide which was flexible to allow in-depth understanding. These interviews were conducted with 08 out of the 10 staff in charge of social media in the PCA and Public Health department.

3.8.2 Coding sheet

The researcher used a coding sheet to systematically categorize and label qualitative data extracted from KCCA's X handle. This data which was extracted using X advanced search was assigned assigning codes to specific parts of the text which allows the researcher to arrange and interpret information (Schwartz, 2021). The research developed a coding sheet with 10 dimensions which were used to analyze content posted on KCCA's X account during Kiteezi landfill.

3.9 Data Processing, Analysis

One of the crucial parts of research is data analysis because it makes the result of the study more effective since it entails the process of collecting, transforming, cleaning, and modeling the gathered information with the goal of discovering the required information (Dawit, 2020).

The researcher applied thematic analysis to analyze the data collected using in-depth interviews. This is because thematic analysis is a qualitative research method that researchers use to systematically organise and analyse complex data sets (Dawadi, 2021). With thematic analysis, the researcher searched for themes that can capture the narratives available in the account of data sets by identifying themes through careful reading and re-reading of the transcribed data. This rigorous thematic analysis approach produced insightful and trustworthy findings because it relies on describing, and interpreting patterns (Dawadi, 2021).

Respondents for In-depth interviews were coded according to how they were accessed for interviews. The first Respondent was coded as Respondent One alongside the tool for data collection (R1, II whereby R stood for Respondent one, and II stood for In-depth Interviews). This was done for all the 08 Respondents for In-depth Interviews. All the interviews were conducted in their offices at KCCA in Kampala. The data collected using qualitative content analysis was also thematically analysed to get similar, and repetitive statements (Rahman, 2021).

The researcher separately identified KCCA's messages on social media that conformed to dimensions such as health, business, or security. Also, variables that present the public feelings such as anger, appreciation, doubts, worry or call for action was identified using codes. All these were majorly responding to research objective two and partly objective three.

3.9.1 Gender consideration

The researcher considered the gender inclusion aspect. However, during data collection, the researcher realized that out of 10 KCCA's staff in charge of social media, only two are female. Therefore, the question of gender balance in terms of getting study participants was not applicable. Much as the researcher ensured that both in-depth interviews and X reactions, comments included males and females.

3.10 Ethical Considerations

Informed consent: The researcher explained herself and the purpose of the study to the study participants within the broader context of the research study. In doing so, the researcher was truthful and straightforward about the study objectives and the anticipated benefits and risks to the individual participant and KCCA. Additionally, the researcher issued a consent form to each participant before conducting the interviews.

Confidentiality: The researcher also assured the participants that what they said was to be kept in confidence in order to earn their trust and thus for eliciting good data. In addition, that audio recordings and transcripts will be stored securely and destroyed after the completion of the research project. At the same time, the researcher protected the participants' privacy by not disclosing personal characteristics that could allow others to guess the identities of people who played a role in the research.

Objectivity: This was incorporated into the research by not getting emotional with the respondents. This was done to obtain in-depth information from respondents and to reduce bias in reporting. **Anonymity:** This was incorporated into the research and this means that there is no way for anyone to personally identify participants in the study. This also means that any study conducted face-to-face or over the phone cannot be considered anonymous; this rules out virtually all qualitative research that involves interviews.

3.11 Study Limitation

The study was carried out in an environment where the people who were subjects of the study were very committed with other obligations since KCCA is a busy organisation. This made the researcher spend a lot of time chasing for the respondent on different days since they could not all be accessed in a single day. The researcher fixed appointment with respondents on days they were convenient to participate.

The process of conducting research was very expensive in terms of finance and time consuming because there were times the researcher was bounced. For instance, the researcher was twice bounced by the head of public and corporate affairs because ad hoc office related assignments

and meetings. Nevertheless, this did not demoralize the researcher and convinced the participants to select other days when they were free until the targeted number was achieved.

Additionally, the study initially aimed to conduct in-depth interviews with 20 participants; 10 from the directorate of public relations and corporate affairs (PCA) and 10 from the Public Health sector to ensure a balanced and diverse range of perspectives. However, during fieldwork, only 8 participants were available and willing to be interviewed, that is 1 from Public Health and 7 from PCA.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS AND DATA PRESENTATION

4.0 Introduction

This study examined the Role of social media in Building a Sustainable Organizational Corporate Image using a case study of Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA) during Kiteezi landfill collapse. The study was guided by three research questions: (1) What strategies did KCCA employ to sustain its corporate image on X during Kiteezi landfill collapse? (2) How did the public react to information shared on KCCA's X page during Kiteezi landfill collapse? (3) What challenges did KCCA encounter in its efforts to sustain corporate image using X during Kiteezi garbage collapse? The data presented in this chapter was collected using qualitative content analysis and in-depth interviews. The findings are presented in form of themes developed from thematic analysis of X content on KCCA account and in-depth interviews.

4.1 Strategies Employed to Sustain KCCA's Corporate Image Using X

The data is presented basing on the themes developed from X content and in-depth interviews. It was found that KCCA sustained its corporate image during the Kiteezi landfill collapse by issuing press releases, engaging directly with victims, providing shelter and support, demonstrating solidarity with survivors, and maintaining a calm communication tone by avoiding emotional outbursts. The data from qualitative content analysis is concurrently presented with data from in-depth interviews.

4.1.1 Press statements

The study found that KCCA utilised press releases as one of the strategies to sustain its corporate image during Kiteezi landfill collapse. The analysis of the KCCA's X content discovered that the institution posted a press release on August 10, 2024 (*see Appendix v*) alerting Kampala dwellers that a tragedy had happened at Kiteezi. In that same press release, KCCA explained that it was yet to ascertain the impact of the collapsed section of the landfill in respect to lost lives and damaged property. *See press release excerpts:*

“The Kampala Capital City Authority Landfill in Kiteezi has had a structural failure in waste mass this morning resulting in a collapsed section of the landfill. The level of damage is still being assessed. However no fatalities have been recorded at this time. Our teams, along with other government agencies are on ground taking the necessary measures to ensure the area is secure and to prevent any further incidents. We are closely monitoring the situation to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the community. We will update you because this is a developing story.” @KCCAUG, August 10, 2024

Participants said posting a press release on the day the Kiteezi landfill collapsed occurred was intended to show that KCCA leadership was fully aware of what had happened and swift response had been undertaken.

“We had to issue an alert warning people not to go over the garbage, to evacuate the survivors and warn others to vacate the nearby homes. It was easier to send a tweet for instance a press statement than calling a press conference. The press release was quickly shared by many X users. This was more efficient than calling a press conference (Respondent 2, in-depth interview, May 20th, 2025).

The above suggests that KCCA found X an easier channel to pass on information about Kiteezi landfill than waiting for legacy media. It also indicates that KCCA found it paramount to inform the Kampala residents of what had befallen in the city.

4.1.2 Victim engagement

The study discovered that KCCA used visits to Kiteezi landfill collapse scene, and commiserate with relatives of deceased people and also those whose property such as houses, businesses and animals had perished in exploded garbage. Among the key KCCA officials who visited the scene included the Lord Mayor Erias Lukwago and then executive director Dorothy Kisaka accompanied by technical teams. These images of officials interacting with victims and Red Cross were also posted ON @KCCAUG X handle. *See tweet excerpts below:*

“The @KCCAUG political and technical led by the @KCCAED and Lord Mayor are at Kiteezi landfill site to coordinate the rescue and evacuation operations. We thank @RedCrossUganda and all other organisations and individuals that have

joined hands to help victims and survivors of this tragedy” (@KCCAUG, August 10, 2024)

Participants said sharing pictures of KCCA’s leaders making regular visits to the scene and engaging the survivors and the bereaved was a strategy to show that people had not been abandoned during the time they needed someone to comfort them.

“We, we used to go to the scene. We would visit and, and see what is happening. Then we come up with what to tweet. Then from there we get content and we tweet on Twitter (Respondent 3, in-depth interview, May 26th, 2025).

The posts of KCCA leaders participating in the rescue process and also chatting with survivors suggests that leaders must show that they are close and responsible for the people’s lives in good and bad times.

Additionally, it was observed that KCCA used X to sustain its corporate image during Kiteezi landfill collapse by sharing photos of the institution providing shelters in terms of tents for the victims. KCCA team provided tents which accommodated some of the more than 300 survivors. *See tweet excerpts below:*

“As we continue with the search and rescue operation to ensure that all affected individuals are accounted for, we have set up a Kiteezi Emergency Response Desk to support the affected community. We continue to send out heartfelt condolences to the bereaved and the suffering because of the devastating effects of the garbage slide @KCCAUG, August 11, 2024.

The study participants said when the Kiteezi landfill tragedy occurred, they realized it needed united efforts to help the survivors and rescue victims. To do this, participants said they used X to call upon all people with capacity to provide help.

“We had to stand with the people that were affected. We reached out to our partners to get support to the survivors. We tried to lobby for funds here and there to provide temporary shelters to the people who were affected (Respondent 1, in-depth interview, May 20, 2025).

The above suggests that KCCA's social media team understood the power of social media and posting information urging able members of the public to provide aid was probably intended to reach out to a wider audience.

4.1.3 Solidarity with survivors

It was established that KCCA sustained its corporate image during Kiteezi landfill collapse by sharing pictures of its executive director Dorothy Kisaka serving survivors a meal. Respondent 4 said they posted the ED's picture serving survivors and the bereaved food because they wanted to so that the institution was in solidarity with them. See tweet excerpts below:

“We visited and interacted with the survivors and @KCCAED served them lunch. Grateful to @UgandaRedCross market vendors and all who continue to contribute daily to support and give hope to the survivors. Your generosity is making a big difference”
@KCCAUG August 18, 2024.

Participants added that they would sit and think of what was appropriate to post on X so as to give survivors and other residents hope that their leaders were in charge. They added seeing KCCA executive director serving survivors a meal, was an opportunity to show the world that the survivors weren't starving.

4.1.4 Avoiding outbursts

The analysis of KCCA X content revealed that the institution sustained its corporate image using X during Kiteezi landfill collapse by avoiding outbursts. It was found that KCCA faced a lot of insults from X users but not anyone was abused or insulted back.

KCCA continued posting what was being done in respect to rescuing victims and helping survivors as well as finding new places where to dump garbage. In fact, one of the abusive statement was responded to with a post showing that President Yoweri Museveni had donated more than five million shillings. *See tweet excerpts below:*

“The priority has been to protect human life and manage the aftermath of the incident as effectively as possible. KCCA appreciates the outpouring of support to the community by Kampala residents. His Excellency the President has provided condolences package of

Ug.5,000,000 to each bereaved family as well as Ug. Shs.1,000,000/= for each survivor”, @KCCAUG posted on August 20, 2024.

Study participants said it was not necessary to engage in outbursts with grieving public. Respondent 4 said all the negative comments, abuses and insults they were getting, were a clear sign that the public was angry with lost lives and destroyed property.

4.1.5 Consistent use of visuals

The study found that KCCA sustained its corporate image using X during Kiteezi landfill collapse through posting images and videos of what the authority was doing. KCCA throughout that period kept posting images of trucks collecting garbage, newly purchased dustbins for Kampala dwellers and its technical team working alongside Red Cross Uganda and Uganda Police Force to retrieve victims’ bodies, provide shelter and caring for survivors. Sometimes notices of what had been done were posted as images.

Study participants said there were many events happening every day in line with Kiteezi landfill collapse and they needed to keep the public informed. Respondents 3 and 7 said if it wasn’t Red Cross offloading items, it was NGOs or other companies including individuals donating all sorts of items to survivors.



“We had more than enough to post on our X account. I can say that Ugandans heard our call to rescue victims and extended a helping hand to survivors. Every day we would have like 10 companies, NGOs or individuals donating items and we consistently used

these photos for our social media platform” (Respondent 5, in-depth interview, May 26, 2025).

The above suggests that KCCA teams knew that visuals such as photos and videos would deliver the information more than mere texts. It also indicates that Ugandans stood in solidarity with survivors of Kiteezi landfill collapse.

4.1.6 Blending X and legacy media

The study found that KCCA used X to sustain its corporate images by posting broadcast media programs in which its technical leaders such as the Executive Director Dorothy Kisaka, director physical planning and director health they were appearing. KCCA would often encourage Kampala residents and other Ugandans to watch or listen to the programs in which its leaders and experts provided detailed information regarding what was being done in response to the Kiteezi tragedy.



Respondents explained that KCCA leaders blended X and legacy media because they wanted to reach all audiences. For instance, Respondent 8 said that they blended legacy and social media because prominent radio broadcasts have their programs live on X and other social media handles.

“When you look at radio stations such as CBS and Next Radio, they air their programs online and have a huge following on social media platforms. We wanted to tap into such platforms whenever our leaders were on air,” (Respondent 8, May 19, 2025).

The above statements show KCCA’s communication teams were very creative and well versed with media trends and usage of social media by broadcasters. It also shows that KCCA knew that not everyone was on X to follow what was happening at Kiteezi but using radio broadcast media catered for such audiences.

4.2 Public’s Reaction to Kiteezi Landfill Information Shared on KCCA’s X Account

The second research question sought to establish how the public reacted to KCCA’s X information about Kiteezi landfill collapse. This data was collected using qualitative content analysis of the comments from the public on KCCA’s X message. Below are the findings under this research question.

4.2.1 Anger and complaints

The study found that many people reacted to KCCA’s information on X with a lot of anger and others expressed concern over unfulfilled projects in Kampala City. Some of the tweets were abusive while others felt KCCA leadership needed to be held responsible for Kiteezi tragedy. *See tweet excerpts below:*

“Sheer incompetence you’re exhibiting, lives lost and many more to come as we approach rainy seasons, the deplorable state of roads to Kiteezi, if I were you I would declare this a disaster and resettle all people around this place as you move waste to a new city landfill” @kajosh, posted on KCCA’s X on August 10, 2024

Another tweep @reezi02 posted on August 15, saying KCCA has nothing it has done right save spending taxpayers’ money on themselves:

“This thing should be disbanded. You can't do anything right. Imagine losing a loved one to a pile of rubbish, bad roads, open sewers, cholera, floods, poor emergency response, poor education. Name one thing you get right? Salary increments & per diem trips??” @reezi02, August 15, 2024

4.2.2 Calling for resignation

The study found that several X users reacted to KCCA's X information regarding Kiteezi landfill collapse by demanding for the resignation of the executive director claiming she had exhibited incompetence. This was after KCCA posted indicating that the search and rescue operation to ensure that all affected individuals were accounted for was ongoing.

“The best thing she can do for the people of Kampala is to resign, if gov't is not giving you enough funds to properly run the city just throw in the towel, don't just stick around for the purposes of keeping a job yet you're literally doing us nothing” @Omwavuateguya, posted on August 15, 2024.

Another tweep using @mubiru account demanded for KCCA's executive director, Doroth Kisaka, resignation letter and reached an extent of offering to help write the resignation letter and she just appends the signature:

“Okay, meanwhile, how far with the @KCCAED resignation?! I can type one, that way, she'll just have to sign. Can I drop it at City Hall tomorrow morning?” @Mubiru, August 15, 2024.

4.2.3 Doubts on deaths numbers

The study found out that many X users repeatedly doubted the figures of the death toll which KCCA posted on its account. When KCCA first reported 10 victims, people doubted and even when it reported that 18 bodies retrieved, they still doubted. Even when KCCA posted that 35 bodies had been retrieved with the help of police, still many X users doubted.

“Why don't you mention that 100+ people have died and only about 35 have been recovered? The other number has been abandoned in the garbage to rot like roadside dogs!” @florecenab, posted on KCCA's post of August 18, 2024.

Like @florecenab, also @Iniram14 doubted the 35 deaths and instead people were more than 100 and the number were expected to continue rising:

“You have managed for 20 years extremely badly the situation, so badly that it has delivered a hundred dead people (and counting...) Now again you are putting the

responsibility on the citizen? Please grow up” @Initram14 replied to KCCA’s X post on August 22, 2024.

4.2.4 Disappointment in KCCA management

The study found that there were several posts demanding that KCCA stops dumping garbage in Kiteezi landfill because it had filled beyond capacity. Several tweets expressed disappointment in KCCA management claiming the authority had had been severally warned about the landfill dangers but no action was taken. It was after KCCA gave an update on rescue mission at Kiteezi landfill.

“We are saying no to garbage again in Kiteezi! You were advised to flatten the hill of garbage which is now a threat to the security men residing there and then residents that remained in their houses but you kept a deaf ear You wait for the second tragedy” @Bbosafred commented to KCCA’s X post of August 22, 2024.

@brunolukyamuzi4 expressed his disappointment with KCCA management and wondered whether they have a technical team that does disaster assessment.

“I’m extremely disappointed by the risk management team at KCCA. Do you have a risk register? Do you have a BCP in place? Nevertheless, I hope this is a learning experience.” @brunolukyamuzi4, commented to KCCA’s post of August 22, 2024.

4.2.5 Call for investigation

The study discovered that the public commented on KCCA’s X account demanding for a comprehensive investigation to establish the cause of the Kiteezi landfill explosion. People claimed there were some chemicals planted in garbage that caused its explosion, hence killing people. *See tweet excerpts and screenshot image:*

“Please KCCA try to investigate the source of the force that drove garbage to close 2kms from the landfill to burry people's houses that led to loss of property and lives” @Bbosafred



Another X user posted condemning KCCA for merely making visits to Kiteezi landfill instead of deploying its technical team to spend days at the scene trying to investigate the cause of the explosion.

“These visits won't cause the impact we need. Can the technical wing of spend quality time on waste management research rather than gallivanting around kiteezi?”
@Nuttyjonah8 commented to KCCA’s post of August 24, 2024.

4.2.6 Appreciation and advice

Despite majority of the comments expressing anger, complaints and demanding for resignations, the study found quite a good number of comments of KCCA’s X account appreciating the efforts that were being taken to address garbage crisis following Kiteezi landfill collapse. Some tweeps offered to educate Ugandans on waste segregation in partnership with KCCA.

“Segregation must be for everyone actually it is easier for markets than households to segregate. Allow us present our concepts on waste management education, fund the proposals then the recycling sector will be ignited thus more revenue” @katende-mercy commented on KCCA’s post of August 30, 2024.

Another X user advised KCCA to turn garbage into electricity in order to avoid incidents such as Kiteezi in the future and also make some money from distributing electricity generated from the garbage.

“Great steps by KCCA! Take it further by building a facility that generates electricity using rubbish, like Sweden does. It will help manage waste effectively while powering the city” @ronaldsimonk’la, commented on KCCA’s post of September 1, 2024.

4.2.7 Sympathy with KCCA

The study found that there were comments sympathizing with KCCA because of limited funding which could not enable it dispose off garbage at Kiteezi landfill. Some tweeps clearly stated that it was wrong to condemn KCCA without looking at the financial aspect.

So you people think the problem was people in office? It is about finances in relationship to waste. Unless you avail money for waste management education you will reshuffle until the president comes and also fails @ssabalongo1 commented to KCCA post of September 26, 2024

Another X user posted sympathizing with KCCA saying they were powerless because all decision were placed in the hands of the executive wing of government which is headed by President Museveni. Using @Gumisiriza account, the X user said there will be nothing much done until all powers for KCCA management are returned to political leadership.

A solution, until the command and control of KCCA is returned to the political leadership of KCCA @Gumisiriza commented on KCCA’s post of September 26, announcing the new interim leadership team headed by Frank Rusa.

4.2.8 Excitement and trust in new KCCA interim leadership

The study found that X users express their happiness over the new KCCA interim leadership. This was after President Yoweri Museveni dropped Dorothy Kisaka and her deputy. X users were excited over the appointment of a man at the helm of KCCA in the name of Frank Rusa and others expressed trust in his leadership.

Finally a man at the helm. These women had started mismanaging the city as if it is a home. @Duncankawooya

Another X user congratulated the new Acting executive director and his team. The X user demanded that the new KCCA leadership needed to start off their tenure with road renovations in Kampala City.

Dear Acting ED and Team, Congs. Can you start with road contractors who bring unnecessary Traffic jam to us? Why can't they work and block at Night, weekends and open partially roads day time. Developed cities do that. We wake up 2look for money not to spend times in Jams n fuel @JustusMuhangi

4.2.9 Sarcasm

The study found that there were many sarcastically crafted message regarding KCCA's new leadership. Many indicated that he was headed for a tough task while others claimed that the new leadership team was probably working hard to fail Dorothy Kisaka and her group.

I can see a great pain of forcing smiles for photos @iamsapex commented on @KCCAUG's X information posted on September 27, 2024.

Another X user sarcastically said Kampala looked like it had been bombed.

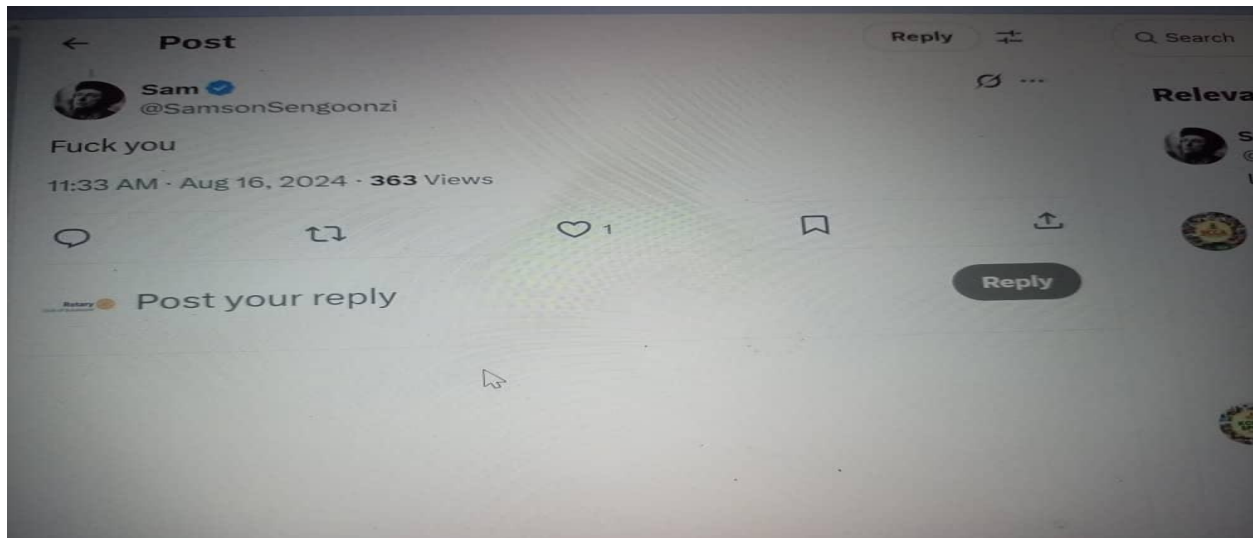
Kampala always looks as if it was bombed in the night by Putin or Netanyahu @initram14, commented on @KCCAUG's X information on handover on September 27, 2024.

4.3 X Challenges During Kiteezi Tragedy

The third research objective sought to establish the challenges KCCA faced while using X to sustain its corporate image during Kiteezi landfill disaster. The data for this chapter was collected using in-depth interviews.

4.3.1 Insults

The study found that one of the major challenges KCCA communication team encountered while using X to sustain its corporate image during Kiteezi landfill were the dominant abusive comments. *See tweet excerpts and image below:*



The participants said they would find majority of the comments insulting and some vulgar but they would just ignore since it wasn't necessary to combat the agitated members of the public

“When you're into public service and in the business of providing a service to the community, sometimes negative criticism is inevitable. So you have to be ready to receive any sort of criticism and you as a public servant, you cannot then be biased by how someone is communicating to you (Respondent 1, in-depth interview, May 20, 2025).

Respondent 8 added that they restrained themselves not to post rebuttal comments because it would have looked awkward for them to abuse back the people who posted abusive or insulting comments. Participants said the abusive or insulting comments showed that people were really annoyed by the tragedy.

You cannot say, okay, they have abused me, let me also abuse them, no, because you're expected to take in all of that, yeah, so professionally, we handled all of those criticisms by not engaging back, yeah, really. There were many replies doubting KCCA's information about what has been done to address a garbage problem (Respondent 8, interview May 19, 2025).

4.3.2 Communicating eviction notice

The study found that KCCA public and corporate affairs team, education and health teams found it challenging to post on X information showing homes that were going to be destroyed in order

to pave way for evacuation process. Participants said when Kiteezi tragedy happened, there were very many homes that were not destroyed by the collapsed garbage but they had to be destroyed in order to create way for evacuation graders and other rescue trucks.

“Imagine someone is grieving because he has lost a child, a relative or a friend. And at the same time, you have to destroy his or her house in order to create a way for the rescue team. Because social media operates in real-time, we would post pictures showing where the buffer was going to pass. Remember people are active on social and they would immediately respond by insulting us and describing as heartless people (Respondent 2, interview May 20, 2025).

Participant 3 said the information they were posting on X to keep the public informed was not letting people to grieve especially the bereaved ones. So, sometimes they would find themselves having to swallow the mercy and actually tell them what they did not want to hear.

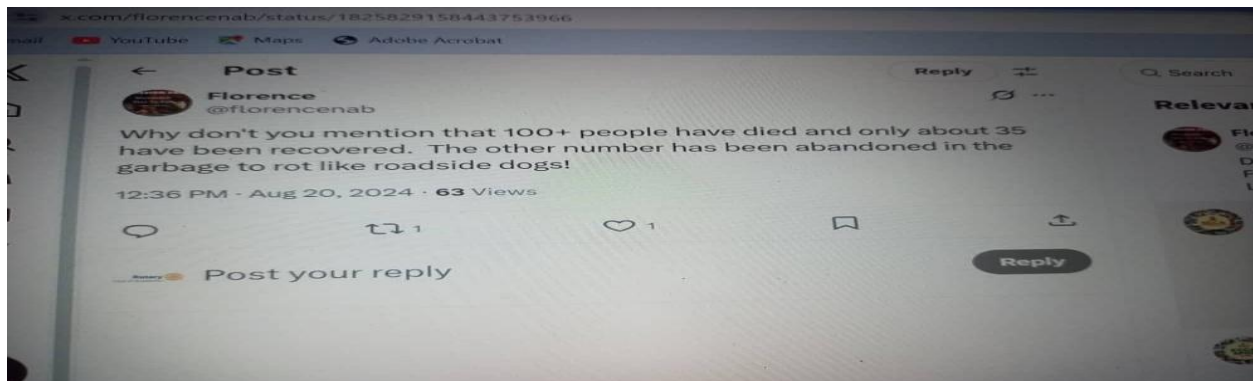
“You see when someone is grieving, you allow them time to grieve and when someone is grieving, they can actually say a lot of things, they can behave in a way that you might not approve. But we had to communicate. For example when you put out a post or some information about vacating their buffer zone and you would see about 50 people commenting, this is our land, why are you telling us to vacate (Respondent 3, interview, May 26, 2025).

4.3.3 Misinformation

The study established that KCCA faced a challenge of misinformation in their bid to use X to sustain its corporate image during the Kiteezi landfill collapse. Participants said there was a lot of false information being shared on X which many people would believe without a second thought.

You would say we have retrieved let’s say 10 bodies, and another posts claiming we were reducing the numbers. Someone would say there were over 100 bodies trapped in the garbage and accuse us of being slow in rescuing lives or retrieving bodies. People were speaking as if they knew who had been buried by garbage yet some had never been to Kiteezi and didn’t know where it is (Respondent 6, interview, May 26, 2025).

Participants added that falsehoods often attracted believability more than the actual truth. See tweet image below:



It was until when the rescue operation stopped and only 35 bodies had been retrieved and there was no one claiming that his or her relative was missing.

Well, because X is open to all to use it, there was a challenge of misinformation. Misinformation. Misinformation and disinformation. All those came up and those made it quite challenging for the actual message to evolve (Respondent 7, interview, May 20, 2025).

4.3.4 Fear

KCCA's communication and health expert team faced a challenge of posting on X about Kiteezi landfill fatalities because of fearing that the public would describe them as insensitive. Participants said internally, everyone was fearing seeing bodies being retrieved from the water filled garbage yet they had to be at scene in order to make posts from the scene.

People had died. Everyone was skeptical in terms of what? What should I say? If I come out, will I be judged? Won't people be looking at me as one of those? There are certain posts I would look at, and then you look at the comment, you wonder, like, what is this? (Respondent 4, interview, May 26, 2025).

Participants further explained they were fearing to put out their faces. Internally, participants acknowledged they had fear, they had stigma of associating with death. According to participants, it wasn't easy to have sight of a body retrieved from water lodged garbage.

4.3.5 Overwhelming inquiries

The study found that KCCA staff mostly those managing X account got overwhelmed by the comments demanding for answers regarding relocation, money for buying new garbage dumping sites and inquiries on whether the victims would be compensated. Participants said whenever they put a mark or ribbon for the buffer zone and posted such information on X, people would comment inquiring on when the compensations were going to be made.

At some point we got overwhelmed. You can imagine, such a big crisis and the number of for X followers that would be posting or, or commenting on your page. You can miss some, but through our general responses. Some of those, inquiries would be handled through the general responses (Respondent 2, interview, May 20, 2025).

Participants added that overwhelming inquiries were also on what was next after Kiteezi landfill collapse. People wanted to know where the garbage was going to be dumped. The inquiries intensified especially when neighbouring urban areas such as Entebbe, Kira and Mukono refused KCCA garbage at their sites.

4.3.6 Information overload

The study participants also faced a challenge of information overload. Participants indicated that almost every hour there was new information that was supposed to be posted. The study found that Kiteezi landfill attracted aid almost from every organization, individuals and families and these donations needed to be posted on X to appreciate public efforts to help survivors.

Of course, social media has very unique challenges. For example, sometimes you have no capacity to manage information. There's a lot of information which comes in. So, managing it sometimes, of course, you know, it's not easy. And, of course, also some information which comes up, it comes from people who may not have capacity, okay, to respond to such a crisis (Respondent 5, interview, May 26, 2025).

Participants further explained that information overload also came from X users who would come up with all forms of information whether genuine or false and sometimes it needed responding with clarity.

We have a challenge of also having a well-developed system to capture all those, you know, comments which come up. Yes, so that's the challenge which we have. X users need you to provide fresh information almost every hour. But they also come up with their own information which is sometimes false (Respondent 6, interview, May 26, 2025).

4.3.7 Contradicting politicians

The study found that KCCA's social media and communication team was challenged by politicians who often provided contradicting information. Participants said many of KCCA's political wing members wanted to show that the Kiteezi landfill collapse was purely a blame on the technical wing.

Participants said the contradictory information provided by the political and technical wings created a lot of public distrust of their X message. According to the study findings, the competition was to show who was right or wrong in the tragedy.

And then there was a lot of distrust of messaging. Remember, in KCC we have different systems. We have different arms. We have the political arm and the technical arm. Now, for such things, when you come, the technical arm has a different way of looking at the problem. And therefore, may want to approach it technically (Respondent 8, May 19, 2025).

Participants also blamed the politicians for using Kiteezi landfill collapse to gain political popularity. They insisted that the political wing members used Kiteezi land fill collapse political scores, political mileage was achieved.

Now, the political arm, when such a thing happens, it is an opportunity for popularity. It is an opportunity to get political mileage. So, as the ED is talking about making people become and what? You see the Lord Mayor going outside and saying, these people, we have told them for this long, they should resign, they should do what..." (Respondent 8, May 19, 2025).

4.4 Conclusion

This data has addressed the gap regarding how public institutions such as KCCA sustain their corporate image using social media platforms such as X during tragedies like Kiteezi landfill collapse. The data has established strategies KCCA used to sustain its corporate image during Kiteezi landfill collapse. The data has responded to the question of how the public reacts to public institution's efforts to sustain corporate image during tragedies and matters that usually attract public rage. The data has also addressed the gap on challenges institutions or organizations face in their efforts to sustain corporate image during tragedies like Kiteezi landfill collapse.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.0 Introduction

This study explored the role of social media in building a sustainable organizational corporate image using a case study of Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA) during Kiteezi landfill collapse. In the previous chapter (four), the study established strategies KCCA employed to sustain its corporate image on X during Kiteezi landfill collapse. The study established how the public reacted to information shared on KCCA's X page during Kiteezi landfill collapse. The study established the challenges KCCA encountered in its efforts to sustain corporate image using X during Kiteezi garbage collapse. This chapter discusses these findings using literature and theoretical framework provided in chapters one and two.

5.1 Strategies Employed to Maintain Corporate Image Using X

The first research objective explored the strategies KCCA employed to sustain its corporate image on X during Kiteezi landfill. The study discovered that KCCA sustained its corporate image on X during Kiteezi landfill using press statements, victim engagement, providing shelter, solidarity with survivors, avoiding outburst, blending social media and legacy media and consistent use of visuals.

The study found that KCCA utilised press releases as one of the strategies to sustain its corporate image during Kiteezi landfill collapse. The first press statement informed the public of what had befallen at Kiteezi and what they were doing to rescue the victims. This was probably done to avoid speculation and to show that they were in charge of the tragedy. It also implies that KCCA knew how social media provides real time information and they did not wait to inform the public through legacy media. This observation regarding social media's ability to provide real time information is consistent with proponents of technology determinism theory (TDT) who argue that technology and society are inseparable (Holbrook, 2021). TDT shows that social media technologies influence organizational communication strategies and public perception. Posting a press statement on X informing the public of the tragedy at Kiteezi landfill probably helped to minimize the speculations the public would have developed if KCCA had waited to relay

information through legacy media. This observation also aligns with Erhard (2023) that use of social media for quick information sharing can strengthen organisation's brand identity and foster emotional connections with the public. This is because when companies share stories, testimonials, or content that resonate with their target audience, it humanizes the brand, evokes positive emotions, and builds brand loyalty (Erhard, 2023).

The study discovered that KCCA used visits to Kiteezi landfill collapse scene to commensurate with the bereaved relatives and console with those whose property such as houses, businesses and animals had been destroyed. The use of images of KCCA's top leadership such as the Lord Mayor and Executive Director interacting with bereaved individuals and survivors was perhaps intended to show the public that the authority had not abandoned the victims at the most critical time. This observation relates to arguments that positive information sharing creates a thinking that the company has thoughtful leaders and this helps to foster trust and credibility among the members of the public who could be customers and stakeholders (Sancilio, 2014). There is also a possibility that KCCA's social media handlers knew that using images of KCCA's top leaders engaging with the bereaved and survivors would shape and control public perception about the organisation's response to the tragedy. This assumption concedes with the inventor and proponents of technology determinism theory who argue that technology shapes and controls society and human behaviour because it has become the driving force behind social and economic change, and that society adapts to the technology that is available to it (Fellow, 2018; McLuhan, 1962).

The study found that KCCA used X to sustain its corporate image during Kiteezi landfill collapse by sharing photos of the institution providing shelters in terms of tents for the survivors and working with other institutions to give a befitting send off the deceased. By doing this, KCCA perhaps intended to show that they are always in touch with its residents in good and bad times. This assumption is identical to arguments of proponents of the theory of Corporate Image that organisations use different tricks to manage and project their image to various stakeholders. Organisations create images that influence perceptions, behaviors, and relationships with stakeholders (Balmer, 1999). Abratt (1989) maintains that organizations often make a concerted effort to manage their corporate images because corporate image management is the key to gaining and keeping public trust. Thus, KCCA's posting of images of leaders providing

mattresses and blankets was well calculated to show that they were caring for Kiteezi landfill collapse survivors. Nevertheless, this assumption is contrary to critics of technology determinism theory who argue that technology makes the public focus on the corporate image created by organisation and forget to ask the roles of individuals when something negative happens (Anaeto, 2008). This argument means that the members of the public were probably reduced to seeing what KCCA was doing to Kiteezi landfill survivors at the expense of asking who had not performed his or her roles to prevent the tragedy from happening.

The analysis of KCCA X content revealed that the institution sustained its corporate image during Kiteezi landfill collapse by avoiding outbursts. It was found that KCCA faced a lot of insults from X users but did not at any one time respond with outburst to the irritating comments. Perhaps KCCA, knew that the public was grieving and that was one of the ways to express anger and it would have worsened the situation by going confrontational. This argument aligns with Nguyen (2011) and Lingelbach (2009) observation that social media communication allows customers to respond to the messages sent by the company, and to express their opinion. But also, social media controls entities because some public comments limit the company's possibilities to control the message content and manage communication (Nguyen, 2011; Lingelbach, 2009). Avoiding outburst with members of the public on X, aligns with arguments of proponents of the theory of corporate image that messages should attract public reaction and it's through such responses, the institution is able to know the message has been received by the audiences (Lee, 2021; Balmer, 1995). This is because the corporate image theory is premised on image, which influences the way in which people perceive, react to certain things and the messages should attract the public to react

The study found that KCCA sustained its corporate image using X during Kiteezi landfill collapse through posting images and videos of what the authority was doing. The researcher assumes that KCCA deliberately chose to use images and videos because they recognize that visuals speak more than words and can create lasting impression in the viewers' minds. This assumption is identical to arguments of Hassan and Basit (2020) that information sharing on social media can profoundly impact corporate image, influencing how a company is perceived by customers, stakeholders, and the public. Social media communication attracts public reaction and enhances corporate reputation (Hassan & Basit, 2020a). Also, (Sackmann, 1989) and (Proctor,

1989) note that use of images helps to form mental pictures to replace thousands of words. In this case, KCCA posted images of what transpired at Kiteezi landfill collapse and were used as part of the study findings. This assists in the process of enhancing the likelihood of achieving new insights of problem-solving and translate subjective matters into new meanings which are explicable by bringing in alternative paradigms (Sackmann, 1989; Proctor; Arndt, 1985).

The study found that KCCA used X to sustain its corporate images by posting broadcast media programs in which its technical leaders such as the Executive Director Dorothy Kisaka, and other leaders were appearing. Blending social media and legacy media through tweeting what top leaders were sharing on air was probably intended to cater for both X users and non-social media users to purposely informing all city residents about the tragedy and what was being done. The idea of blending social media particularly X and broadcast media connects with (Basit 2020) observation that the Internet penetration has increased social interaction and reduces information gap. Nowadays, even the legacy media have to keep themselves busy on social media because the Internet has integrated communication and created a need for innovation in order to keep organisations in touch with their audiences (Basit, 2020; Yusuf, 2018). Organisations no longer have excuses because social media presentation has become an emerging trend for firms as a cost-effective tool to build their corporate image and to enrich customer relationships (Basit, 2020; Yusuf, 2018). Basit and Yusuf add that entities have adopted social media as a part of companies' integrated communication strategy and as a new way of managing public relation.

5.2 Public's Reaction to Kiteezi Landfill Information Shared on KCCA's X Account

The second research objective sought to establish how the public reacted to KCCA's X information about Kiteezi landfill collapse. The study established that majority of the comments on KCCA's X posts about Kiteezi landfill collapse were in form of expressing anger. The public also reacted by asking questions, expressing doubts, appreciating KCCA in some aspects and calling for resignation of institution's leadership.

The study found that the public reacted to KCCA's information on X with anger with abusive comments. This anger expression perhaps was an indication that KCCA hasn't done enough to address the needs of Kampala residents. This observation concedes Liang et al. (2024) highlights of the warning signs that an organisation might have an image problem which include poor

relationships with vendors or government officials. Since some comments on KCCA posts about Kiteezi were abusive in nature, it shows that the organization has gaps in addressing the residents' issues which attracted a lot of anger during Kiteezi landfill collapse. KCCA perhaps needs to create ways of improving its image among members of the public by identifying issues attracting anger and addressing them. This argument is consistent with (Fill & Roper 2012) recommendations that business owners and managers must take steps towards improving their image. KCCA needs to have long terms efforts to improving its image because a good corporate image can take years to build and only moments to destroy (Fill & Roper, 2012). However, this argument does not agree with critics of technology determinism theory who insist that technology is fatal and sometimes make individuals and organisations become victims (Oluwuyi, 2008; Onabanjo, 2008). Going by this context, KCCA's efforts to use X to sustain its image during Kiteezi landfill collapse was fatal and the institution was probably made appear powerless.

The study found that the public reacted to KCCA's X information regarding Kiteezi landfill collapse by demanding for the resignation of the executive director claiming she had exhibited incompetence. This was a clear vote of no confidence in the supreme head of KCCA and it was probably an indication that the authority under her leadership had not taken time to understand issues perturbing the residents. Nevertheless, KCCA did not reply any of these calls for the resignation of the executive director and this perhaps implies the comments posed a challenge to their efforts to sustain their corporate image during Kiteezi landfill collapse. This observation aligns with (Jumalik & Oktaviany, 2023) that negative feedback on social media can pose challenges to corporate image. Indeed, the study found that one negative comment would be followed by series of others of the same tone. The two authors add that complaints about product defects, poor service, or unethical behavior can spread quickly and damage brand reputation. Jumalik & Oktaviany, explanation relates to arguments of (Olowuyi 2008) that utilization of technology for instance social media is complex because it does not shape society and culture but society and culture shape it. Microblogging Apps such as X provided KCCA an opportunity to provide real time information regarding Kiteezi landfill collapse. However, the same technology could not tame the society's culture of expressing anger and spontaneous call for resignation of the executive director.

The study found that many X users repeatedly doubted the figures of the deaths which KCCA posted on its account. This implies that the society was believing much of unfounded information regarding the actual number of fatalities at the expense of authentic information provided by KCCA as an institution that was in charge and on the ground. There is possibility that people were receiving false information from other social media users which increased public mistrust in the authority's official figures. This assumption marches views of Becker et al. (2013) and Jumalik & Oktaviany, (2023) that negative feedback can erode trust, deter potential customers, and even trigger reputational crises if mishandled. When an institution faces backlash on social media and public outrage, it might lead to long-term damage to its image (Jumalik & Oktaviany,2023; Becker et al., 2013). Nonetheless, the negative doubts of KCCA's figures about Kiteezi landfill collapse victims confirms McLuhan technology determinism theory that technology for instance social media does not make citizens only consumers but also producers of media contents and they are now part of the agenda setters previously shaped by experts. Regardless of whether the figures the public were using to doubt KCCA's Kiteezi landfill fatalities were wrong or right, the citizens had turned themselves into journalists with information they perceived collect and contradictory to the institution with authority.

The study found out several tweets expressing disappointment in KCCA management claiming the authority had been severally warned about the landfill dangers but no action was taken. It was after KCCA gave an update on rescue mission at Kiteezi landfill. This outcome is contrary to the views of Kooyman (2016) who stresses that positive feedback on social media can be a boon for corporate image. When customers share glowing reviews, testimonials, or photos of their experiences with a brand, it serves as powerful social proof, bolstering credibility and trustworthiness (Kooyman, 2016). However, the doubts show the public had a lot of mistrust in KCCA as an institution of authority on Uganda's capital. Nevertheless, proponents of technology determinism theory suggest that criticism provides an institution an opportunity to make structural analysis to illuminate its corporate and public communication dynamics(Finley, 2021). Therefore, KCCA can utilise the doubtful comments by the public to assess why there is mistrust in its information and this could be a basis for devising better corporate image strategies.

The study discovered that the public commented on KCCA's X account demanding for a comprehensive investigation to establish the cause of the Kiteezi landfill explosion. People

claimed there were chemicals planted in garbage that resulted into the explosion of the garbage which killed several people. This call for an investigation based on claims that the Kiteezi landfill collapse had been induced by chemicals, could be an indication that the public had much more information which was not known by KCCA, hence the authority could explore that line to establish how genuine or wrong it was. This argument links with Jumalik and Oktaviany (2023) social media can be a source of information that could help improve an organisation's reputation by monitoring and responding quickly to complaints or feedback (Jumalik & Oktaviany, 2023). This is because feedback on social media has become increasingly influential in shaping corporate image, as platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram serve as virtual town squares where people express opinions, share experiences, provide information and interact with institutions (Jumalik & Oktaviany, 2023). Also, Lee (2021) a proponent of the theory of corporate image argues that image is a powerful means of communicating with people to entice them to act in a meaningful way, adding that an organisation utilizes the feedback to develop strategies that help to prosper its image even further. But also the public feedback help organisation address the loopholes in its image management at both the strategic and tactical level which becomes a tool for growing potential (Lee, 2021).

Despite majority of the comments expressing anger, complaints and demanding for resignations, the study found quite a good number of comments on KCCA's X account appreciating the efforts that were being taken to address garbage crisis following Kiteezi landfill collapse. Some tweets offered to educate Ugandans on waste segregation in partnership with KCCA. The appreciation from some members of the public could be an indication that despite the challenges that came with Kiteezi landfill collapse, KCCA had been doing well in some other aspects regarding the management of the city. This also implies KCCA can build on the things that have attracted public appreciation to address gaps that have cast it in the negative side of other members of the society. This opinion is identical to opinions of Tran et al. (2015) that corporate image feedback leads to improvement based on the way people perceive, react to certain things and develop powerful meanings. This is because corporate image and corporate personality interact with each other (Tran et al., 2015). This outcome also links with views of Shah (2011) and Gilpin (2010) that organizations, which participate in high interactivity modules, such as micro blogs, should be ready to react quickly and flexible, because the public have more power to manage communication than they have in more controlled channels, such as news portals and

blogs. Therefore, KCCA could capitalize on appreciative messages (feedback) to assess what they have done well and also this would help them know what hasn't been done well so that negative sentiments can be addressed (Tran et al., 2015; Shah, 2011; Gilpin, 2010).

The study found that there were comments sympathizing with KCCA because of limited funding which could not enable it dispose garbage at Kiteezi landfill. Some tweeps clearly stated that it was wrong to condemn KCCA without looking at the financial aspect. The public sympathy probably means that some members of the public are much aware of the challenges KCCA is enduring in the efforts to provide services to city residents. This observation agrees with explanations that any institution's image in social media is easily reflected by the tone of users' comments: positive, neutral or negative (Skerik, 2011). Therefore, organisations such as KCCA can base on such feedback to identify the areas that need improvement which leads to corrections in identity elements and social media communication strategy (Skerik, 2011). Also, the public sympathy in respect to KCCA's efforts to respond to Kiteezi landfill collapse and other city challenges could imply that the institution was honest in its communication. This is because any dishonest, misleading or negative information shared on social media can have detrimental effects on corporate image (Cai, 2022).

The study found that X users expressed their happiness over the new KCCA interim leadership and this came after President Yoweri Museveni dropped Dorothy Kisaka and her deputy. There are two assumptions resulting from the change of leadership excitement. It was either that the old KCCA management was not addressing people's needs or the public knew that the new leadership had better capacity to handle the city's challenges compared to the one that was being replaced. However, Hassan & Basit (2020) note that when organisation ignore public concerns or continuously share unfounded, or misleading information, it leads to backlash, boycotts, and reputational crises, causing long-term harm to an institution. Going by this assumption regarding public trust in new KCCA management, it could be that the authority had been giving false hopes to the residents in respect to the matters they had been raising. As result, they deemed it important to celebrate the departure of the old leadership and placed hope in the new leaders (Hassan & Basit, 2020).

Also, the excitement and trust in new KCCA management provided the new leadership an opportunity to assess what people think the replaced regime did not well and this would help

them perform better. This argument aligns with Becker et al. (2013) that effective management of social media feedback is crucial for maintaining a positive corporate image. Thus, organisation can capitalize on the feedback to provide prompt and transparent responses to public concerns as a way of demonstrating accountability and responsibility to stakeholders that they are valued and committed to addressing the issues (Becker et al., 2013). Nevertheless, CiCso (2015) disagrees with this line of argument using the weaknesses of corporate image theory where he maintains that technology does not determine human action but that rather, human action shapes technology. This implies that the ways in which technology is used cannot be understood without understanding how that technology is embedded in its social context (CiCso, 2015).

The study found that there were many sarcastically crafted messages regarding KCCA's new leadership. This probably meant that the public believes that the new leadership would have no impact unless factors that made the replaced regime fail are addressed. This assumption concedes to arguments of Brown (2010) and Wang (2011) that organisations need to first address gaps in the existing operation policies or shortfall in the existing product before releasing new policies or product on the market. Going by this argument, it implies that it would have been better to first address matters that failed the previous regime are addressed before appointing new leaders. This observation relates to Wang (2011) and Brown (2010) argument that if the organization starts a new policy or releases a new product that causes a negative reaction from customers, reversing the decision can have a positive impact on the brand image (Wang, 2011; Brown, 2010). Wang and Brown maintain that addressing factors affecting the existing product means, the company or institution is listening to public and wants to meet their needs. In the context of KCCA, public sarcasm regarding the difficult tasks the new management had been assigned to carry probably means the factors that had led to failures by the former regimes had to be first addressed. However, the appointing authority merely changed leadership faces. This is because self-assessment and taking responsibility for mistakes and correcting them helps you to earn trust from customers and can limit the damage to the company image (Wang, 2011; Brown, 2010).

5.3 Challenges KCCA faced while using X during the Kiteezi tragedy

The third research objective sought to explore the challenges KCCA faced while using X to sustain its corporate image during the Kiteezi landfill disaster. It was established that KCCA faced among other challenges abuses or insults, information overload, fear, politicians, and communication eviction notices.

The study found that one of the major challenges KCCA communication team encountered while using X to sustain its corporate image during Kiteezi landfill were the dominant abusive comments. The researcher assumes that the abuses were a clear indication that the public was angry with KCCA over an incident they believe could have been prevented. But also, the insults helped KCCA know the anger people have about an institution. This argument identifies with Kuvykaite (2012) that social media's spontaneous feedback helps organisations interact with its audience and in turn, it is able to understand how the public or clients are feeling about the entity. Social media helps organisation interact with audiences and collect actual feedback and this helps an entity to know how it is fairing in regards to reputation status (Kuvykaite, 2012). This can be a basis for developing mechanisms to revive the affected corporate online reputation and this could change public opinions about certain services, products or brands (Kuvykaite, 2012). It is important to address the causes of public rage because it affects the corporate reputation (Kuvykaite, 2012; Kaplan & Haenlein, 2009). The insults and abuses KCCA encountered while using X to sustain corporate image during Kiteezi landfill collapse also gives credence to Hauer (2017) and Onabanjo (2008) criticism to technology determinism theory that technology such as social media do not provide control to institutions and individuals to manage the way people react to their messages. If KCCA had ways of preventing any abusive comment from appearing on its X handle, probably this wouldn't have been cited as a challenge.

The study established that KCCA found it challenging to post on X information showing homes that were going to be destroyed in order to pave way for evacuation process. This shows that communicating negative information to already agitated public is very challenging as it often attracts rage. KCCA's eviction notes following the tragedy that attracted negative public reaction credits Sancilio (2014) argument that when companies share informative and engaging content, such as product updates, industry insights, or behind-the-scenes stories, it demonstrates transparency, expertise, and authenticity. Despite the information regarding homes that were

going to be destroyed, KCCA fulfilled its mandate to alert residents to leave because their homes were going to be destroyed for rescue operations. Information sharing can position a company as a thought leader in its industry, fostering trust and credibility among customers and stakeholders (Sancilio, 2014). So, KCCA communicated its position regarding rescue operations and homes that were going to be destroyed regardless of their public reaction. However, this line of argument contradicts Erhard (2023) that information sharing can strengthen brand identity and foster emotional connections with customers (Erhard, 2023). In this context, eviction notice shared on KCCA's X handle could not attract any positive reaction especially from the owners of the homes that were going to be erased down.

The study established that KCCA faced a challenge of misinformation in their bid to use X to sustain its corporate image during the Kiteezi landfill collapse. This outcome points to the possibility that some individuals saw Kiteezi landfill collapse as an opportunity to unleash all sorts of misinformation perhaps to discredit the organisation or to gain clout of the tragedy. The argument does not deviate from the reasoning of Jumalik and Oktaviany (2023) that negative feedback aided by technology can erode trust, deter potential customers, and even trigger reputational crises. Perhaps the crafters of misinformation during Kiteezi landfill collapse aimed at eroding KCCA's public trust. This also cements Ngwu and Anioke (2020) criticism to technology determinism theory that technology is not a neutral force, but rather is shaped by social and economic factors. This means technology was used by some individuals to discredit KCCA through misinformation and it also implies technology can be used depending on individuals or group aims and goals (Ngwu & Anioke, 2020; Jumalik & Oktaviany, 2023).

It was established that KCCA's social media team feared to use images of retrieved bodies on X. However, the fear regarding posting images of retrieved bodies left the public demanding for proof that indeed victims had been retrieved from the collapsed garbage. The decision not to post images of retrieved bodies on X shows KCCA respects the emotional and psychological aspects of its audiences. This assumption contends with the discussion of Skerik (2011) the company's image in social media is easily reflected by the information it posts and the tone it uses to reacts to the users comments. KCCA probably scored highly by not succumbing to demands for the public to show proof that bodies had been retrieved from the collapsed landfill. This aligns with

Balmer (1999) arguments about corporate image theory that organisation must at all times considers how this image influences perceptions, behaviors, and relationships with stakeholders.

The study found that KCCA staff mostly those managing X account got overwhelmed by the comments demanding for answers regarding relocation, money for buying new garbage dumping sites and inquiries on whether the victims were to be compensated. These inquiries mean that the public steadily followed KCCA's X account as a source of real time information. It also shows KCCA was interacting with audiences with varying interests because some were interested in knowing the true information about rescue operations while others needed information about who was going to be compensated for lost relatives and lost property. This outcome aligns with Fombrun (2007) argument regarding corporate image theory that organizations interact with diverse audiences in the context of social media. This becomes a solid foundation for investigating how different stakeholders perceive and respond to an organization's social media presence. However, KCCA admission that inquiries overwhelmed them means they were probably not prepared to interact with audiences of different interests. This calls for developing various means of engaging various audiences with different interests on social media (Fombrun, 2007). This is also consistent with Van Riel (2007) argument that corporate companies have no means to control social media users to stick to what they want to communicate. As KCCA opted to post on what was happening on the ground, many users were interested in compensation and other issues. This means that organisation may not use technology to restrict audiences on what they want but technology can help in shaping an organization's corporate image (Van Riel, 2007).

The study participants also faced a challenge of information overload because Kiteezi landfill attracted aid almost from every organization, individuals and families and these donations needed to be posted on X as a way of appreciating public help to survivors. It could be possible that KCCA's continuous alerts on X of how people needed aid in terms of food and shelter was the source of attracting many individuals and organisation response. This argument contends with Kakumba (2021) that social media has become an integral part of modern society in Uganda. The author adds that X is one of the popular social media sites that are being used in Uganda and the quick response from individuals and organisation gives credence this line of argument (Kakumba, 2021). Probably many users who came across KCCA's X information on

what was needed to help survivors shared on their individual accounts, hence attracting overwhelming responses and in turn caused information overload. This confirms explanations that social media has become more resourceful and users are now using this platform as a way to practice citizen journalism. This implies the public no longer have to wait for the newspapers, radio stations or even television stations for news bytes because uploads of events are made as and when they unfold (Kakumba, 2021). This study outcome and observation is also identical to views of McLuhan (1962) technology determinism theory that technology shapes society and culture. In Kiteezi landfill context, technology ignited the sharing and helping culture.

The study found that KCCA social media and communication team was challenged by politicians who often provided contradicting information. Probably KCCA lacked mechanisms of providing spontaneous information to challenge the politicians' narratives which depicted the institution as telling lies. This assumption contends with Becker et al. (2013) that effective management of social media feedback is crucial for maintaining a positive corporate image. Any institution should have ways of providing prompt and transparent responses to customer concerns as a way of demonstrating accountability and responsiveness, signaling to stakeholders that the brand values their feedback and is committed to addressing issues (Becker et al., 2013). If KCCA probably had means of providing continuous and spontaneous information, it would have not been challenged by politicians' false narratives. KCCA fell short of views pointed out by proponents of technology determinism theory that technology is beneficial to all and helps organisation to get feedback and provide information that continuously improve corporate image and reputation (Țicău & Hadad, 2023).

5.4 Conclusion

This chapter has used literature and theoretical framework to discuss the challenges KCCA faced on X while trying to sustain its corporate image during Kiteezi landfill. The chapter has also discussed the implication and meaning of how the public reacted to KCCA's social media information about Kiteezi landfill collapse. The chapter has also discussed the challenges KCCA encountered while using social media provide information about Kiteezi landfill collapse. The next chapter provides conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER SIX FOUR

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.0 Introduction

This study established the role of social media in building a sustainable organizational corporate image using a case study of Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA) during Kiteezi landfill collapse. The study was guided by three research objectives. The first objective established strategies KCCA employed to sustain its corporate image on X during Kiteezi landfill collapse. The objective established how the public reacted to information shared on KCCA's X page during Kiteezi landfill collapse. The objective established the challenges KCCA encountered in its efforts to sustain corporate image using X during Kiteezi garbage collapse.

6.1 Summary of Findings

The study was guided by three research objectives; each aimed at understanding the role of social media specifically the X platform in building a sustainable organizational corporate image of the Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA) during the Kiteezi landfill collapse.

Under the first objective, which sought to identify the strategies used by KCCA to sustain its corporate image during the crisis, several key approaches were identified. These included issuing official press releases, engaging with bereaved families and survivors, providing essential supplies and support to those affected, consistently using visual content in communication, maintaining a calm and composed tone by avoiding emotional outbursts, and effectively blending social media with traditional media to widen the message reach.

The second objective aimed to examine how the public responded to the information KCCA disseminated via the X platform during the landfill incident. Public reactions were mixed and included expressions of anger, skepticism toward the accuracy of KCCA's updates, direct insults, messages of appreciation and sympathy, calls for the resignation of specific officials, and expressions of trust in the newly appointed leadership.

The third objective focused on the challenges KCCA encountered while using the X platform during the crisis. The findings revealed that the Authority faced several obstacles, including verbal abuse from the public, an overwhelming volume of inquiries, the spread of

misinformation, politically motivated distortions, internal fear among staff, and difficulties in managing information overload in real time.

These findings provide important insights into both the potential and limitations of social media as a tool for crisis communication and sustaining corporate image within public institutions, in this case KCCA.

6.2 Conclusion

This study set out to examine the role of social media specifically the X platform in building a sustainable corporate image a case of Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA) during the Kiteezi landfill collapse. The findings reveal that KCCA adopted a multi-pronged communication strategy aimed at managing public perception during the crisis. These strategies included issuing timely press releases, engaging directly with victims and bereaved families, sharing visual content of relief efforts, and combining the reach of social media with traditional broadcast media. By avoiding emotional outbursts and presenting a composed institutional tone, KCCA sought to portray itself as responsive, empathetic, and capable in the face of a tragic event.

However, public reactions to these efforts were mixed. Many members of the public used the X platform to express anger and frustration, not only in response to the landfill tragedy but also as a reflection of deeper dissatisfaction with the Authority's overall performance. Some questioned the accuracy of the information shared, while others called for the resignation of key officials. At the same time, a number of users expressed appreciation, sympathy, and cautious optimism, especially following the appointment of new interim leadership. These divergent reactions highlight the emotionally charged and politically sensitive environment in which crisis communication occurs on social media and on how organizations sustain their corporate image.

The study also found that KCCA encountered several significant challenges while using X during the Kiteezi landfill collapse. These included managing abusive public commentary, addressing widespread misinformation, handling the volume of inquiries and demands from the public, and navigating politically motivated distortions of official messages. The pressure to provide frequent updates, especially from development partners, contributed to information

overload, while internal concerns about public backlash made the communication process even more difficult.

In conclusion, while KCCA demonstrated effort and intent in using social media to sustain its corporate image during the Kiteezi landfill collapse, the findings suggest that the effectiveness of such efforts is heavily influenced by public trust, institutional credibility, and the ability to navigate complex digital communication environments. Social media offers a powerful platform for engagement during crises, but it also presents significant risks and challenges that must be carefully managed. The case of KCCA illustrates the importance of strategic planning, transparency, and adaptability in using digital platforms to build a sustainable organizational image in times of crisis.

6.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, several recommendations are proposed to enhance the effectiveness of social media use in building a sustainable corporate image, particularly during crises like Kiteezi landfill.

Firstly, **KCCA should enhance its responsiveness and public engagement mechanisms** on digital platforms. This can be achieved by establishing dedicated social media monitoring teams trained in real-time response, digital diplomacy, and misinformation management. The ability to promptly address public concerns especially during crises can help prevent frustration and emotional outbursts from online audiences. KCCA, and other public service institutions, must develop rapid-response protocols that prioritize public concerns and feedback to foster trust and accountability.

Secondly, there is a critical need for **psychosocial preparedness among staff**, especially those on the frontlines of crisis communication. Evidence from the study indicated that the traumatic scenes at the Kiteezi landfill emotionally affected some KCCA officials. Therefore, institutions providing public services should invest in training their personnel to manage the emotional and psychological impacts associated with tragedies, including offering counselling and psychological support services where necessary.

Thirdly, **capacity building and continuous training** should be prioritized for communication officers across departments. These training sessions should focus on strengthening digital communication skills, with emphasis on crisis communication. Areas such as visual storytelling, strategic message framing, misinformation handling, audience segmentation, and public sentiment analysis should be integrated into the training modules. Furthermore, all institutional staff should be sensitized on how to interpret and respond to public mood on social media, as several negative public reactions during the Kiteezi crisis stemmed from posts perceived as unrelated or insensitive.

In addition, public institutions must prioritize consistent and meaningful engagement with citizen demands and feedback. Findings revealed that KCCA was often accused of ignoring public concerns expressed on social media. To address this, institutions should implement structured feedback mechanisms, including timely acknowledgment of inquiries and consistent provision of updates. This two-way communication approach can significantly improve public perception and institutional credibility.

Moreover, institutions like KCCA should avoid selective engagement. The study found that KCCA rarely responded to public inquiries on the X platform during the Kiteezi landfill collapse. A proactive approach to feedback whether positive, critical, or demanding—demonstrates accountability and reinforces the institution’s commitment to transparency and service delivery.

Finally, it is recommended that KCCA establishes a 24/7 social media communication structure to ensure continuous information flow. The findings highlighted that most posts were made during working hours, with minimal activity in the evenings or over weekends. However, crises often evolve unpredictably and require round-the-clock monitoring and communication. A dedicated team operating beyond regular office hours can ensure that urgent updates are shared in real-time and that public concerns are addressed promptly, regardless of the day or hour.

6.4 Areas of Further Research

The researcher proposes three areas of further research which include:

Any further study can be conducted to assess how the media reported Kiteezi landfill collapse purposely to explore whether the angry public expressed on KCCA's X handle was captured in legacy media stories.

A study can be conducted to how residents of Kiteezi are living with aftermath of Kiteezi landfill collapse which would provide insights on bereavement and loss of property coping mechanisms.

Further research can be conducted to assess public perception towards KCCA's efforts to prevent recurrence of Kiteezi landfill collapse.

A study can be conducted comparing how different public institutions in Uganda use social media to manage their image during a crisis.

A study can be conducted to examine how the residents living in the new places where KCCA is dumping garbage feel following the tragedy that happened at Kiteezi landfill

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APPENDANCES

Appendix i: Data Collection Tools

CODING SCHEDULE			
KCCA's USE OF X TO BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE ORGANIZATIONAL CORPORATE IMAGE DURING KITEEZI LANDFILL COLLAPSE			
	Item	Category	Code
1	Coder's name: KEMIREMBE DAPHINE		
	Coding date: dd/mm/yyyy		
2	Format of message on KCCA's X page: Here the researcher selected depending on the format it was posted. For instance whether the post was image only, text only, video only or both.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Text only 2. Image only 3. Text and image 4. Video only 5. Video and text 6. Image, text and video 	
3	Message in the post: The researcher identified the dimensions in KCCA's X messages which include health, business, security, appreciation, announcing new tax or operation procedures. These dimensions were included because Kiteezi landfill was a health and security disaster for people living in the area and general public since garbage could not be collected on some days.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Health 2. Business 3. Security 4. Appreciation 5. New tax 6. Operation procedures 7. Other 	
4	Targeted audience: The researcher identified the targeted audience in KCCA's X communication and these were categorized as traders, transporters, workers, travellers, security personnel or residents.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Traders 2. Transporters 3. Residents 4. Workers 5. Security 6. Travellers 	
5	Days of the month when posts were made: Here the researcher assessed days when KCCA's X engaged the public. These were categorized in the interval of five e.g 0-5, 6-10 and so on	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1- 0-5 2- 6-10 3- 11-15 4- 16-20 5- 21-25 6- 26-31 	

6	<p>Number of post per day: The researcher assessed the number of posts KCCA posted on its X handle each day during Kiteezi landfill collapse.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1- One 2- Two 3- Three 4- Four 5- Five 6- More than Five 	
7	<p>Public Reaction to KCCA’s X message: The researcher focused on number of likes, reposts, comments and views KCCA’s X posts on Kiteezi landfill attracted public reaction.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1- Less than 20likes 2- 20-40 likes 3- Over 60 likes 4- Less than 10000 views 5- 10000-20000 views 6- Over 30000 views 7- Less than 20 comments 8- 20-40 comments 9- 40-60 comments 10- Over 60 comments 	
8	<p>Message in public comments on KCCA’s X posts: The researcher focused on the kind of messages contained in public comments on KCCA’s X posts about Kiteezi landfill. This focus on appreciation, expression of anger, advice, complaint, doubts or sarcastically.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Anger 2. Appreciation 3. Doubts 4. Complaints 5. Advice 6. Sarcastically 7. Other 	
9	<p>KCCA’s response to public comments on X. The researcher assessed how KCCA social media handlers responded to public comments during Kiteezi landfill collapse. This included assessing whether KCCA’s messages were confrontational, fault admission, apologetic, advice or retaliation.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Advice 2. Confrontational 3. Retaliation 4. Fault admission 5. Apologetic 6. Other. 	
10	<p>Days of the week when KCCA posts most. The researcher assessed days of the week when KCCA was most active on X during Kiteezi landfill collapse. This was done using the number of posts made in a single day and response to public comments.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sunday 2. Monday 3. Tuesday 4. Wednesday 5. Thursday 6. Friday 7. Saturday 	

Appendix ii: Interview Guide

Name:

Gender:

Age:

Designation:

Department:

Section 1: Strategies Used by KCCA to Sustain Its Corporate Image

1. What communication strategies did KCCA employ during the Kitezi landfill collapse?
2. What role did social media play as a communication strategy during the crisis?
3. How did KCCA decide on the type of information to share on X during the Kitezi landfill?
4. Were there specific messaging techniques or content types (e.g., text updates, images, videos) that you prioritized to sustain KCCA's corporate image?

Section 2: Public Reaction to KCCA's Communication

5. How did the public react to the information KCCA shared on X during the Kitezi landfill collapse?
6. Did KCCA monitor public responses, comments, and engagement on X? If so, how was this done?
7. How did KCCA respond to public criticism or negative feedback during the Kitezi landfill?
8. During Kitezi landfill collapse, many people raised questions on X but they were never replied. Why?
9. There were so many replies doubting KCCA's information about what was being done to address the garbage problem and rescue Kiteezi victims. Why do you think there is too much public doubt?

Section 3: Challenges Faced

10. What challenges did KCCA encounter in using X to communicate during the Kitezi landfill collapse?
11. Were there any internal challenges (e.g., coordination, decision-making) that affected the communication process?

12. Did KCCA experience any technical or logistical challenges while using X to sustain its corporate image?

13. In hindsight, what improvements would you recommend for managing future crises through social media?

Conclusion:

- Is there anything else you would like to share about KCCA's use of social media during the Kitezi landfill collapse?

Appendix iv: Data Collection Authorisation Letter

Kemirembe Daphine
2021/HD03/2060U
Makerere University
daphinekemirembe2@gmail.com
19th May 2025

To: The Director Administration and Human Resource
Kampala Capital City Authority
Kampala (U)

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO COLLECT DATA.

I hereby write to seek your approval to collect data in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of a Master of Arts in Journalism and Communication at Makerere University

My dissertation is titled:

"The Role of Social Media in Building a Sustainable Corporate Image: A Case Study of KCCA during the Kitezi Landfill Collapse."

This study aims to:

1. Examine the strategies KCCA employed to sustain its corporate image on X (formerly Twitter) during the Kitezi landfill collapse.
2. Analyze how the public responded to information shared via KCCA's X platform during the incident.
3. Explore the challenges KCCA encountered in maintaining its corporate image through social media during the crisis.

The research will involve collecting data through qualitative methods, particularly in-depth interviews with selected staff of KCCA and analysis of KCCA's social media content posted during the crisis period. Participants will be selected purposively based on their roles and relevance to the study objectives.

I have attached the following documents for your review:

- Research proposal (chapter one as requested)
- Interview guide
- Informed consent form
- Introductory letter



Appendix v: Data Collection Acceptance Letter



DIRECTORATE OF ADMINISTRATION AND HUMAN RESOURCE

REF: DAHR/KCCA/201/17

21st May, 2025

Ms. Kemirembe Daphine
Makerere University
Tel No: 0778170848/0705543843
KAMPALA

RE: REQUEST FOR RESEARCH DATA

Reference is made to your letter dated 2nd May, 2025 on the above subject.

This is to inform you that permission to obtain data for your study **"The Role of Social Media in Building a Sustainable Corporate Image: A Case Study of Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA) during the Kitezi Landfill Collapse"** has been granted to you.

The above permission is granted to you on the following conditions:

1. Participation in your study is voluntary and the informed consent process should be observed at all times.
2. You will provide a report to the office of the Director Administration and Human Resource of your findings after the study.

By copy of this letter, the Deputy Director Public Corporate Affairs is notified and requested to render you all the necessary support.

Mugalya Abel Ndoboli
FOR: DIRECTOR ADMINISTRATION AND HUMAN RESOURCE

Copy: Deputy Director Public Corporate Affairs
File Copy

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Plot 1-3 Apollo Kiggwa Road
Tel: 0414 231 446 / 0204 660 000
Web: www.kcca.go.ug, Email: info@kcca.go.ug
f: facebook.com/kccaug, t: @KCCAUG

Appendix vi: Extracted KCCA X Posts

@KCCAUG August 10 The Kampala Capital City Authority Landfill in Kiteezi has had a structural failure in waste mass this morning resulting in a collapsed section of the landfill. The level of damage is still being assessed. However no fatalities have been recorded at this time. Our teams, along with other government agencies are on ground taking the necessary measures to ensure the area is secure and to prevent any further incidents. We are closely monitoring the situation to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the community. We will update you because this is a developing story.

Response

Joshua Akandwanaho @kajosh. sheer incompetence yo exhibiting, lives lost and many more to come as we approach rainy seasons, the deplorable state of roads to kitezi, if I were you I would declare this a disaster and resettle all people around this place as you move waste to a new city landfill

@KiwanukaMoses11 Studies were made on the slope stability of that landfill but I doubt whether you took time to read them. You guys have a research department in a restmood.

Duke of Bugerere

@Engnassernsimbe Script..Pot bellied men n women will be on site donning reflectors..They will promise safe disposal practices and compensation to the victims in loud voices..Bamale babule ppaka nga tragedy endala eguddewo!

@KatakwiGuy Why are you still dumping at a landfill that got full in 2014? You secured a new site in dundu mukono but because of big shots residing around it, you have been stopped from moving away from kitezi. Untreated leachate from kitezi is contaminating water catchments en u know it

@KCCAUG August 15, 2024

As we continue with the search and rescue operation to ensure that all affected individuals are accounted for, we have set up a Kiteezi Emergency Response Desk to support the affected community. See posters on how you can be part of this. We continue to send out heartfelt condolences to the bereaved and the suffering because of the devastating effects of the garbage slide.

Response

Okay, meanwhile, how far with the @KCCAED resignation?! I can type one, that way, she'll just have to sign. Can I drop it at City Hall tomorrow morning?

@Omwavuateguya

The best thing she can do for the people of Kampala is to resign, if govt is not giving you enough funds to properly run the city just throw in the towel, don't just stick around for the purposes of keeping a job yet you're literally doing us nothing.

@reezi02

This ki thing should be disbanded. You can't do anything right. Imagine losing a loved one to a pile of rubbish, bad roads, open sewers, cholera, floods, poor emergency response, poor education. Name one thing you get right? Salary increments & per diem trips??

@KCCAUG August 18, 2024

We spent the day at the Kiteezi camp where over 300 survivors of the garbage slide are housed. After prayers led by local religious leaders, we visited the tents, interacted with the survivors and @KCCAED served them lunch. Grateful to @UgandaRedCross market vendors and all who continue to contribute daily to support and give hope to the survivors. Your generosity is making a big difference.

Response

@SamsonSengoonzi

@reezi02

You are failures. You can't assuage loss with meals on wheels. What's more useful is doing your job and not causing people endless suffering by neglecting your job and thinking that presenting them with a finite meal is worth it. When will the people we are waiting for govern this nation. You lot are not it.

@florecenab

Why don't you mention that 100+ people have died and only about 35 have been recovered. The other number has been abandoned in the garbage to rot like roadside dogs!

@Mutumyco

2009, 2011, 2015, 2018..... You were warned about that garbage issue but nothing was done and now you're pretending to be of assistance..... We need to see some resignations

@KCCAUG August 20, 2024

KCCA'S RESPONSE TO THE WASTE SLIDE AT KITEEZI LANDFILL.

The Kampala Capital City Authority @KCCAUG has provided this detailed statement in response to the disastrous waste slide at the Kiteezi Landfill. We are deeply saddened by the loss of lives and the injuries caused to residents and the loss of property. It is estimated that forty-four homes were affected. By Saturday 17th August 2024, 35 bodies had been recovered, and

eighteen persons had been rescued. The emergency Response Centre at Kiteezi has to date received approx. 352 people.

Response to the Waste Slide Incident On 10th August 2024, the day of the waste slide, emergency services were dispatched promptly, and efforts were coordinated with relevant ministries, departments, and agencies to provide relief and mitigate further risks. The priority has been to protect human life and manage the aftermath of the incident as effectively as possible. KCCA appreciates the outpouring of support to the community by Kampala residents. His Excellency the President has provided condolences package of Ug.5,000,000 to each bereaved family as well as Ug. Shs.1,000,000/= for each survivor. The Office of the Prime Minister is leading on the response to the disaster and has provided support including food, mobilizing excavators and fuel to continue the excavation works. We are grateful to the sister Ministries and agencies for the support, and we thank all our teams at the emergency response center in Kiteezi for the work they are doing. The leaders in the Kiteezi community have been very proactive and we are grateful for the facility offered at Church of Uganda, Kiteezi Primary School to accommodate the displaced. ¼

It is essential that KCCA explains the various actions that have led to this incident over time to enable the public to appreciate the challenges of waste management. The situation at Kiteezi landfill has been shaped by numerous external factors beyond KCCA's direct control dating back to 2013. KCCA has made efforts within the constraints imposed by these external factors to protect public safety as we explained here below. This is not an attempt to apportion blame but rather to bring to light the constraints faced in the management of Kiteezi

Kiteezi landfill operated beyond its capacity The Kiteezi Landfill has been in operation for twenty-eight years as the primary waste disposal site for Kampala City, since 1996. By 2013, the National Environmental Management Authority (NEMA), declined to renew the landfill's operating license saying that it had reached its full capacity. However, the landfill use was continued since there was no alternative waste disposal. This was necessary otherwise there would be citywide public health crisis arising from unmanaged waste accumulation in the city. As such, since 2013 to date, Kiteezi has been operating in crisis mode.

Kampala city generates beyond 2,500 tons of garbage each day. There are over 170 trucks delivering garbage to Kiteezi each day from every home, school, trading space, and market. The waste generation per capita is estimated at half a kilogram per day per person. The landfill also serves three administrative areas, Kampala, Wakiso and parts of Mukono. During financial year 2023-2024, a total of approx. 400,000 tons of garbage was deposited at Kiteezi. The site capacity was extremely stretched.

Inadequate Funding KCCA commenced the Kiteezi landfill decommissioning journey in 2014 by working with the International Finance Coporation IFC, of the world bank. They provided technical support for the Kampala Solid waste management project. As part of implementation of this plan, KCCA acquired 135 acres of land in Ddundu Mukono to establish a new landfill and thereby decommission Kiteezi. However, the residents of Ddundu, rose up in strong opposition to that plan and foiled the peaceful relocation to Ddundu.

Again, Kiteezi continued in operation despite its adjudged inability to accommodate more garbage which stretched it further. But there was no alternative site and there was no budget provision for a new site. By 2020, the budget for decommissioning was indicated as UGX36 Billion which would include the cost of resettling the 600 waste pickers who derive their livelihood from garbage picking. 2/4

KCCA included this money in the budget framework paper but it was reflected it as unfunded priority in the budget appropriation. In the subsequent years thereafter, the request for solid waste management was listed as unfunded priorities, in FY 20/21, FY 21/22, and FY 24/25. In January 2024, KCCA appeared before the Parliamentary Committee to brief the budget committee for the solid waste management planned works. The request included purchase of additional land in the area of Kiteezi and compensation of project affected persons. Several potential investors have come to KCCA, through unsolicited proposals but they want sovereign guarantees and mandatory upfront infrastructure development which KCCA can't provide due to lack of funding. KCCA has had investor expression of interest from Germany, India and China. The lack of funding meant that KCCA could not move forward with the planned decommissioning of Kiteezi and neither could KCCA buy alternative land. Meanwhile the garbage continued to pile up into a garbage mountain. Failure to decommission means compressing the garbage to decrease its looming piles. The funding provided each year caters for Kiteezi management, garbage transportation costs, city cleaners and incidentals.

Population Growth and Increased Waste Production The city of Kampala has seen significant population growth over the past decade, a factor that directly contributed to increased waste production. This exponential growth placed unprecedented pressure on the Kiteezi Landfill. Originally designed to serve a much smaller population. In 1996, the Kampala City population was 1,013,000 people.

In 2024 the day population has doubled to 2,503,174 (UBOS) people and yet the solid waste management budget remained stagnant. The geographical area of the landfill is 39 Acres. The buffer zone created around the periphery has over the years been encroached upon.

Consequently, waste has been stacked vertically, a practice that introduced new risks of unstable slopes and excessive waste heights. KCCA technical team, continuously monitored the landfill's condition and implemented all feasible safety measures.

4. The 500m Buffer Zone The National Physical Planning Standards require a 500-meter buffer zone around landfills to mitigate risks to surrounding communities. Kasangati Town Council's zoning laws prohibit encroachments but still the buffer zone was encroached upon. These developments are in Kasangati Town Council and involve private landowners and developers. The association of waste pickers which gathers 600 waste pickers on the garbage pile have had engagements with the KCCA solid waste management team to sensitize them on the dangers of living near the garbage. 3/4

Risk Mitigation When the alert of developing cracks was made on 2nd July 2024, KCCA immediately prioritized the safety of the community by focusing on budget-neutral interventions. KCCA solid waste management team met with the key leaders of the community and conducted

a public awareness campaign to inform the waste pickers and nearby residents of the potential dangers associated with the landfill. KCCA issued warnings and advisories, urging residents to take precautions. On 8th July 2024, the community of the Kiteezi landfill salvagers were sensitized to avoid working in risky areas and the on the slopes of the landfill which had developed cracks. The Local Council leadership and the security forces in the area were equally informed of the situation. These actions were aimed at minimizing the risks posed by the continued operation of the landfill. A comprehensive mechanized response to the developing cracks necessitated a detailed outlay of the interventions and the attendant costs to be prepared by the experts. The current rains have played a part in the disintegration of the garbage. The incident fundamentally affected the households which were dwelling near the edges of the garbage piles upto approx.150 Meters on the lower slides. The leachate plant on the lower sides of the slope was also submerged. Conclusion In conclusion, KCCA affirms that the sad incident of the waste slide at Kiteezi Landfill was a culmination of continuing external constraints. KCCA did not neglect its duty of care and endeavored to exercise its mandate within the budget constraints. The external constraints include inadequate funding, the inability to decommission the landfill and relocate operations, the challenges posed by rapid population growth, and the encroachment of residential developments within the designated buffer zone. At every stage, KCCA has acted with due diligence, making decisions aimed at minimizing risk within the severe limitations imposed by these external factors and notifying the supervising authorities of the dangers related to the delay of decommissioning. The precautions taken in informing the community leadership and the waste pickers saved lives. KCCA remains committed to public safety and responsible management and remains dedicated to ensuring that future waste management strategies in Kampala are robust moving to the new technologies of converting waste to usable forms of energy and other uses. We continue to grieve the loss of lives in our community and to nurse the victims. Thank you for the feedback through the various forums. We reiterate our commitment to building a vibrant attractive and sustainable city in the pearl of Africa 4/4

Response

@TheNovermberman

The reason you guys are in office and get facilitated and paid is to solve the challenges not you coming to us to tell us challenges as people continue dying.

@HomieCharlie

FUCK ALL THE WAY OFF RESIGN. You have the blood dozens of innocents on your hands!

@YMmwajwala

So you people buy land that isn't viable for your purpose and after making a loss, you claim inadequate funding??? Did you even do the social impact assessment??

@KCCAUG August 22, 2024

PUBLIC NOTICE: SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT POST KITEEZI.



Response

@Kyakundwa

In any functional country, the first step after this disaster would be holding accountable those responsible for the loss of lives. But hey, this @KagutaMuseveni's kakistocracy, where anything goes.

@Initram14

you have managed for 20 years extremely badly the situation, so badly that it has delivered a hundred dead people (and counting...) NOW AGAIN you are putting the responsibility on the citizen with the 3R PLEASE GROW UP!

@brunolukyamuzi4

I'm extremely disappointed by the risk management team at KCCA. Do you have a risk register? Do you have a BCP in place? Nevertheless, I hope this is a learning experience.

@Bbosafred

We are saying no to garbage again in Kiteezi! You were advised to flatten the hill of garbage which is now a threat to the security men residing there and then residents that remained in their houses but you kept a deaf ear You wait for the second tragedy

@KCCAUG August 23, 2024

The @KCCAED will today Friday 23, Aug, 2024 be live on @cbsfm-ug (88.8 FM) starting 8pm in “Londoola Ensonga” program. Tune in to follow the discussion on waste management in the city and all issues KCCA.

Response

@Maczzonmuhwezi

Following, rich and detailed fantastic submissions, by the ED!

@KatottoKingM

Enkima gyekoma okuwalampa..... U wouldn't have exposed this empty t I n. Coz tayina kidako

@Bbosafred

Please KCCA try to investigate the source of the force that drove garbage to close 2kms from the landfill to burry people's houses that led to loss of property and lives

@KCCAUG August 24, 2024

@ParliamentofUganda represented by the Public Accounts Committee on Commissions, Statutory Authorities and State Enterprises (COSASE) visited the Kiteezi landfill and camp on a fact finding mission. The visit was intended to help the committee appreciate the state of the landfill, challenges faced and steps taken to address the challenges. This will help the committee to assess the facts gathered and make policy recommendations.

@Crystalsarah

@Dorothkisakka must resign she murdered the people of #Kiteezi

@Nuttyjonah8

These visits won't cause the impact we need. Can the technical wing of spend quality time on waste management research rather than gallivanting around kiteezi?

@Davedronyi23

This had to be done way before , Infact that committee deserves to be lynched , by those who lost their Loved ones , Negligence that leads to death and attempted Death , is Criminal and tried by Courts of Law

@Tmusakasereka

It's too late , those who died , did die in vain, we could have saved those lives . Our work methods is so flawed that we respond to catastrophe after it has happened and not to prevent it from happening even after spending on mitigation and drawing conclusions

@KCCAUG August 26, 2024

THIS EVENING: Do not miss #KCCAOnAir with @KCCAED @Dorothkisaka on the Big Talk with @Canarymugume on @nextradio-uganda Tune in for all issues Kiteezi, sustainable waste management plus more @ForBetterCity

Response

@Bbosafred You failed to remove the Dead bodies from the garbage and took All excavators and security away but you will also die!

@Initram14

When she's resigning?

@birungi-flor

She must Resign

@KCCAONAIR. Kiteezi serves Kampala and the metropolitan. Due to factors like population growth, garbage generated has increased overtime. @KCCAED.

Response

@Caesarmutyaba

let's look at the number and distances btw gas station/the commonly known petrol stations in the city. Another crisis could be coming soon or later. This is common sense not i know or more. Another kiteezi is coming in different version. Am looking at planning authorities

@KasujjaEdgar

U guys visit big cities and understand how garbage is managed 1, put in place strict laws on all buildings in the city to have reserved inspected garbage collection rooms that can be operated in shifts to manage garbage collection and disposal but not littering it on road

@Kamogaali89

Don't tell us stories we want kiteezi road fixed

@KoyinSistim

Your bin at UBC is the indicator that your Authority is promoting mixed waste collection and that is the problem

@KCCAUG August 29, 2024

We hosted a waste management and sanitation engagement at Kitante Primary School, drawing Smart City Ambassadors from all 857 villages of the city. The event, is part of our ongoing efforts to rally grassroots to adopt innovative and sustainable methods for managing solid waste starting from home.

@Sylvesterkabomb

Sensitize the people to sort out their garbage at home in different bags/ bins before you come for collection. Things that rot shouldn't be placed with plastics, metal and others in that category. That would make it easier for collectors who dump it at sites.

@vitalisasiku

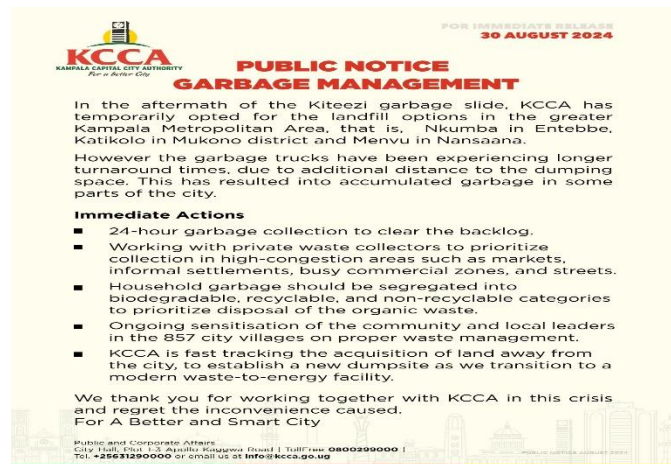
Stop these excessive sloganeering before you get the basics right. SmartCity this, SmartCity that. Calling Kampala a Smart city is diabolical.

@TumuhimbiseGeo9

Smart what? Oh my God Kisakka and Lukwago!

@KCCAUG August 30, 2024

PUBLIC NOTICE: In the aftermath of the Kiteezi slide, we have taken several measures to manage solid waste in the city. Poster has more



@katende-mercy

Segregation must be for everyone actually it is easier for markets than households to segregate. Allow us present our concepts on waste management education, fund the proposals then the recycling sector will be ignited thus more revenue.

@KCCAUG September 1, 2024

For proper waste management, we have installed waste storage containers (skip containers and street litter bins) across the city. We implore the public to ENSURE that all garbage is disposed of in these designated places.

@ronaldsimonk'la

Great steps by KCCA! Take it further by building a facility that generates electricity using rubbish, like Sweden does. It will help manage waste effectively while powering the city.

Reply

Thank you! This is work in progress.

@DrNdahayo

@Spirejim the garbage exhibition has started yielding results.

Reply

Jackson, You surely do not believe this equipment was procured today, do you?

@EbongaAnna


Ya'll are not as wise as you think, but it's expected. Nothing significant to show for all your time in existence. Just a rotten and still rotting city.....but it's expected.

@Kaly Then why mention, display and talk about them today? Why have you not been putting them to use in "boosting" your cabbage collecting capacity?

@KCCAUG Sept 26, 2024

PUBLIC NOTICE: In accordance with the provisions of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, under Article 174(1), which empowers the President to appoint public officers, the public is hereby informed of the following interim appointments...

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
26 SEPTEMBER 2024



KCCA INTERIM LEADERSHIP

In accordance with the provisions of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, under Article 174(2), which empowers the President to appoint public officers, the public is hereby informed of the following interim appointments in KCCA to ensure the continued operation and administration of the city.

NAME	CURRENT POSITION	INTERIM APPOINTMENT
Frank N. Rusa	Director Legal Affairs	Executive Director
Robert Nowere	Director Revenue Collection	Deputy Executive Director
Dr. Sarah Zalwango Karen	Ag. Deputy Director Medical Services	Director Public Health & Environment

We wish to congratulate the interim appointees and wish them God's blessing as they take on this assignment.

We also extend our gratitude to the outgoing leadership team for their service during their tenure, and we wish them well in their future endeavors.

Further communication will be provided upon the conclusion of the appointment process by the Uganda Public Service Commission.

For A Better City

Public and Corporate Affairs
City Hall, 6th Fl, 100 Arnold Obuswa Road | Toll Free 0800299000 |
Tel: +25631290000 or email us at info@kcca.go.ug

PUBLIC NOTICE SEPTEMBER 2024 1/1

@Samsonsengoonzi

You are just shuffling deadwood. Probably, these same people were undermining their bosses at every turn. I so loath KCCA as an institution.

@musananjuba

You People With Quoting God In Your Things, We Await Your Changes The Interims

@agumenaitweAST2

The only solution for red aunts is killing them from their starting point

@kitende-mercy

so you people think the problem was people in office? It is about finances in relationship to waste. Unless you avail money for waste management education you will reshuffle until the president comes and also fails

@ssabalongo1

a solution until the command and control of KCCA is returned to the political leadership of KCCA.

@Gumisiriza

Finally a man at the helm. These women had started mismanaging the city as if it is a home.

@Duncankawooya

But before Dorothy was a man, the Engineer Kitaka, or you wanna infer that he is not a man?? And before Jennifer was a string of male mayors.

@MarkRutaro

I hope Dr. Sarah gets rid of Okellos secretary. She is bad to her reputation and the reputation of the institution

@ali_sental

Kati legal affairs ate now ED hmm Kampala will always be messy it needs someone who's done urban development and physical planning

@KCCAUG Sept 27, 2024

The outgoing leadership has handed over their respective offices to the interim appointees this afternoon. We wish the outgoing the very best in their future endeavors.

Response

@Kiberujimmy

looks like it was a terse hand over meeting.

@iamsapex

The pain of forcing smiles for photos

@tumwebazej36

The pain in the smiles

@BrightJo5

They have eaten wat is enough for them. Safe journey

@JustusMuhangi

Dear Acting ED and Team, Congs. can you start with road contractors who bring unnecessary Traffic jam to us. Why cant they work and block at Night, wknds and open Partially roads day time. Devloped cities do that. We wake up 2look for money not to spend times in Jams n fuel

@Balikuddem75103

Kpla prob is not the ED but the appointee

@KCCA October 3, 2024

We are fully committed to resolving the Kiteezi situation as we focus on finding long-term, sustainable solutions.” @KCCAED said this and more when he visited Kiteezi.

October 11, 2024

Today @KCCAUG gave out personal protective equipment to the private emptiers as an incentive for licensed companies. It is important for sanitation workers to work in a safe environment.

@KCCA October 12

In order to quickly dewater the flooded area of Kitetika, we have started using water pumps to push over 10,000 cubic meters (10,000,000 liters) of water daily to restore normalcy in this community as soon as possible. This is in addition to the ongoing excavation to unblock the drainage channel and stabilize slopes. We continue to encourage people within the 200m landfill buffer zone to evacuate to avoid any further issues that may arise from the litched-filled water and unstable garbage slopes

Response

@MimiMopape. Absolute bullshit

@initram14

uganda always looks as if it was bombed in the night by Putin or Netanyahu

@MutereggaM

Good work boss

@muhoozi_s

Good work

@Cityzen256

So you will pumping it every time it rains!!! We have a lot jokers in this Uganda.

@InfiniteXAfrica

Encourage?! What sort of language is this? Will that be your excuse when disaster strikes?!
Enforce the evacuation as an authority in order to protect the people. What kind of
laziness/lameness is this?! And pse don't mention budgets n lack of funds, these are lives!