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**Faculty of communication and information science**

**Department of Library and Information Science**

The use of social media as a tool for interaction: the case of NUST Library

by

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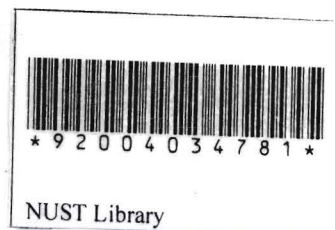
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## **ABSTRACT**

Social media is one of the technologies that NUST library can effectively use to communicate research information. The researcher observed that library patrons received very little communication from the library on matters such as the closure of the library. The library could use social media applications for communication however; social media has not been appreciated and adopted as a tool for interaction between the library and its patrons. Hence, the study sought to investigate the use of social networking applications and tools for interaction between students, the library and the library staff members. The study target group was all NUST undergraduate students and library staff members. A survey was conducted, where questionnaires were distributed to a random sample of undergraduate, part 2 and part 4 students, from the departments of Library and Information Science (parallel classes) Marketing and Risk Management and Insurance and Quantity Surveying. Unstructured interviews were conducted on selected librarians at NUST. It was found that there is a high awareness of social media amongst the undergraduate students. It was that Facebook (36%) and YouTube (33%) are the most popular social media applications used by students and librarians. Blogging sites such as MySpace had very little popularity. Most of the students, 88 % felt that social media should be used in the library premises, however, NUST Library's social media policy, though unwritten hindered social media within the library premises. Therefore, it was not surprising to find that the NUST Library Facebook page had very few comments from students and staff alike. It was concluded that library policies that do not foster or encourage social media use, low bandwidth and the low number of computers within the library result in low usage of social media within the library premises or for library business. The study recommended that social media policies need to be created and should encourage the students to use social media to actively participate in the library's development.