

NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

**Faculty of Communication and Information Science
Department of Library and Information Science**

**Social Media as a Tool for Sharing Academic Knowledge among Undergraduate Students at
HIT University**

by

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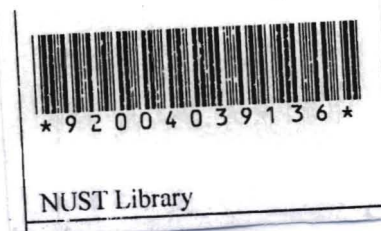
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Abstract

This study explored social networking technologies as a tool for sharing academic knowledge among undergraduate students at Harare Institute of Technology. This researcher was triggered off to carry out the research when he became a Subject Librarian for Food Processing Technology, Pharmacy and Bio Technology Departments. The researcher carried out some ILS sessions on academic benefits of social media and had constant interactions with the students at Reference desk, in the Reader Services Office and in the computer laboratories. Although the students were exposed to social media technologies like Facebook, Twitter, You-tube, Library WhatsApp Group Forums, Library Facebook pages, etc there was no evidence available for the usage of social media for sharing academic information. HIT population of Conventional, Block and Parallel students is 1400. The target population was 800 conventional students. Sample size was of 80 students was arrived at using the John Curry's sampling method. There were more than 500 likes of the Library page but they were not exploiting the tool academically. The researcher chose a mixed-methods research design, where both qualitative and quantitative data was collected concurrently in the study. Methods of data collection included Interviews, observations, questionnaires. The collected data was analysed using SPSS. An analysis of the results seems to suggest that the majority of students were mainly using Facebook, WhatsApp, You-Tube and LinkedIn. Furthermore, it also emerged out that students used social networking technologies for sharing non-academic information mostly. It was also established that social networking technologies improved students' technology proficiency,. The respondents also faced problems of bandwidth and speed of internet and electricity break down/ load shedding. The researchers recommended that proper training may be organized for appropriate use social media.