

**NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
FACULTY OF COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION SCIENCE
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**THE STATE OF PREPAREDNESS FOR DIGITAL CURATION AND PRESERVATION:
A CASE STUDY OF THE NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND
TECHNOLOGY LIBRARY**

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ABSTRACT

Digital technologies have allowed libraries to create, manipulate, store, and make accessible vast amounts of different types of digital content, however they imperil the longevity of the very objects they produce and require very different management than what has been practiced in the paper-based world. Despite the fact that the National University of Science and Technology (NUST) Library had amassed a growing body of digital collections, there were no formal mechanisms in place to ensure accessibility and long-term preservation of digital content. The study sought to assess the state of preparedness of NUST Library for digital curation and preservation of its digital collections. The conceptual framework used in this study was inspired from the frameworks used by Sinclair et al. (2011) and Boyle, Eveleigh, and Needham (2008). NUST Library preparedness for digital curation and preservation was assessed looking at awareness, competencies, technology infrastructure, digital disaster preparedness and challenges to digital curation and preservation. A mixed methods research design employing a case study research strategy was adopted for the study. The total population of NUST library staff is 52 and 32 staff members were selected via purposive sampling. Data was gathered through questionnaires, observation, interviews and a focus group discussion. The findings of the study revealed a low level of awareness of digital curation and preservation. The study established that library staff possessed mostly traditional library skills which were relevant in the field of digital curation and preservation, however they lacked digital preservation specific technical skills. The Library had some strategies in place to prevent digital disasters; however the level of confidence in handling digital disasters was low. Challenges to digital curation were mainly found to be lack of policies, lack of expertise by library staff and lack of funding. It was recommended that the Library should consider digital curation and preservation as one of primary responsibilities and take staff training in this area seriously in order to ensure current and future access to digital collections. One of the main recommendations was also for the library to look for alternative sources of funding for digital curation and preservation projects.