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**SOCIAL MEDIA SECURITY AWARENESS AMONG FEMALE STUDENTS AT THE
NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY IN BULAWAYO**

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DATE	ACCESSION	CLASS No
06/03/19	SC 19/1087	

**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS OF THE MASTER OF SCIENCE DEGREE**

IN


LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE

ACADEMIC SUPERVISOR

MR E. MUPAIKWA

BULAWAYO, ZIMBABWE

YEAR 2018



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ABSTRACT

In an age where convenience, efficiency and global reach are critical components of communication, social networking sites have become increasingly popular. The allure of worldwide visibility and connectivity has culminated in risky information behaviour among social networking sites users, with females being the most adversely affected. This study was thus conducted to determine the level of social media security awareness among female students at NUST. The positivist paradigm was adopted and the survey employed as a research method. The Social Media Security Awareness framework crafted by Ishak et al., (2012) was identified as most suited to the study due to its two-pronged focus on technological and human dimensions in social media security. Quota sampling was utilised to facilitate the selection of relevant research participants and ensure reliability of the results. Statistical data was gleaned from 150 undergraduate female students through questionnaires, analysed and presented in the form of tables and graphs. Findings showed that social media security awareness among female students was compromised and was greatly influenced by factors such as the students' perceptions of possible online threats, the desire for visibility as well as the influence of close acquaintances. In order to remedy this, recommendations offered included social media security trainings by the university as well as the provision of an online facility through which students can securely report any violations encountered on social networking sites.