

**Social Media Platforms Usage for Learning and Library Services in Selected Higher Learning Institutions in Zanzibar.**

**ABSTRACT:**

This study aimed at examining the usage of social media platforms used on learning and library services in Higher Learning Institutions in Zanzibar. The Study specifically focused on five (5) social media platforms at three selected universities located in Zanzibar. The study involved three research questions. The first question was saying about what are the types of social media platforms used on learning and library services for knowledge sharing in SUZA, ZU, and SUMAIT? The second question said what are the uses of social media platforms used on learning and library services for knowledge sharing in SUZA, ZU, and SUMAIT? And the third question said that what are the challenges facing librarians when social media platforms are used on library services for knowledge sharing in SUZA, ZU, and SUMAIT? The methods that were used in the study include both quantitative and qualitative research designs. Questionnaires and interview tools were used for collecting data to the respondents. The combinations of purposive and stratified random sampling techniques were employed on library users through questionnaires and interviews would take with librarians. The result of this study showed that social media platforms are very well known by the respondents and daily used in their studies. Also, social media are effectively used in most academic libraries to support education progress and most of the respondents prefer using social media in their studies because of Sharing knowledge that involves learning, understanding, extending, and repeating the information, ideas, views, and the resources among persons, connected on a specific ground. The result presented that the availability of social media platforms in the academic library has totally changed the image of the library in terms of delivering the services to the users from the librarians who use social media for reference purposes as a result of having a high number of users on using library through knowledge sharing. The result of the study showed that Poor knowledge of managing and using electronic records and Poor support from the management are the great challenges facing libraries in operating social media platforms on learning and library services for knowledge sharing in higher institutions in Zanzibar as a result of failing to reach many audiences. The study concluded that Social media provide more chances for interaction, connection, sharing, and communication with library users in the library. Librarians could use social media to market their services and resources using

**different platforms.**

**Keywords:** Social Media Platforms, Library, Library Services, Higher Learning Institutions

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Emanuel and Osuolale (2019) stated that University libraries offer different services to users. These services rendered are lending services, referral services, reference services, indexing, and abstracting services. Library resources on the other hand are information materials that include print and non-print formats. Library and information services are resources that should satisfy the need of library users. It is obvious that Librarians could use social media platforms in learning in higher institutions as follow:

### ***Facebook***

Libraries try to link some of these specialized library applications to Facebook. IJS (2018) states that Librarians could use Facebook to promote Library service by hosting the library homepage (Fakas, 2007), advertising opening and closing hours, locations, website information, newly acquired materials, and classmate interaction and discussion on special subjects.

### ***WhatsApp***

Instant text messaging, voice calls, video calls, documents, and media sending services are all available on this platform (Tech Crunch, 2015) Librarians can send instant messages to users and get instant responses. Urgent information that requires Library users' attention can be communicated to users, and even documents and materials can be sent to users at any time and even outside the Library's working hours.

### ***Blogs***

Librarians can periodically post messages, share information on a particular subject or issue, and allow users to contribute to the content. They can write articles, and news on topical issues and expect an instant reaction from their users. Rogers (2009) added that “Blogging can be used to promote library services like library outreaching, dissemination of information, building library image, communicate both to internal and external users, and highlight new material arrival and promoting available materials in the library collection. Also, Librarians can promote library

services like opening hours, special library events, online discussion and community services like festivities in their local communities, ceremonies, sports” (Ekoja, 2011).

### ***LinkedIn***

Librarians can get patrons connected with specialists in their particular field of interest via LinkedIn. Librarians can use this platform to render specialized services such as Strategic Dissemination of Information (SDI). Wen (2005) added that In Academic institutions where the students are; libraries have taken advantage of this site to post, calendar, custom catalog search tools, and blog features to improve their presence.

### ***Twitter***

Users can utilize this platform to type in short messages or status updates. According to Chitumbo and Chewe (2015) “Twitter is an online real-time news and social networking platform where users post and interact with messages. The ease of posting, interacting, and sharing of information on these platforms has made it a very vital platform for librarians to reach and interact with library users” (Waddell and Barnes, 2012).

In addition to this Bakare (2018) stated that “the modern technology age is fast moving people from the 4 walls of Library room to social media platforms and Librarians can use these platforms to reach users and even profit from their usage. The growth of social media and social networking sites has been one of the most impressive aspects of the internet in recent years and its popularity is undeniable”.

Nick (2011) claims that “Social media offers an accessible way to engage with patrons and potential patrons, particularly the elusive younger generation or ‘digital natives’ who are now entering the workplace having grown up in a culture of sharing information, inviting others to contribute and contributing to online discussions”. However, Bakare (2018) stated that “as information sources and delivery channels of information seekers changes due to the advancement in technology, Librarians whose primary responsibility is to provide library and information service must move with this trend”. Bakare (2018) further added that “Library users are greatly migrating to other sources of information like the internet and making librarians losing some relevance. Recently, social media applications in libraries have become very popular in the world. Library services can be promoted through social media platforms because the

platforms are dependable for information dissemination, prompt feedback mechanism, research, and course promotion”.

On other hand, Okonedo and Popoola, (2012) stated that “Knowledge sharing enables librarians to share their insight and experiences in order to allow for fast, efficient and effective provision of information services to their users. Sharing knowledge involves learning, understanding, extending and repeating the information, the ideas, the views, and the resources among persons, connected on a specific ground”. However, Okonedo and Popoola, (2012) added that “the success of knowledge sharing among librarians is claimed to build upon the amount and quality of interactions among librarians, as well as upon addressing issues related to the reluctance to share knowledge, and the willingness and ability to use knowledge of others”.

In addition, Agatha (2020) in his study shows that “library resources and services in Tanzania are underutilized due to poor marketing”. On other hand, Isibika and Kavishe(2018) indicated that “University students in Tanzania are effective users of social media and the majority of them prefer Facebook for information sharing and keeping in touch with friends and family”. Although Bakare (2018) said, “the majority of students in higher learning institutions are effective users of social media, it is not well known how the libraries use these five (5) social media tools for knowledge sharing of library resources”. Therefore, this study aims to examine the usage of social media platforms for learning and library services in higher learning institutions in Zanzibar.

### **1.2 Significance of the study**

The study attempted to explore the impact of the **libraries** in Zanzibar on improving reading culture through social media in Zanzibar. Hence, it was beneficial to the staff of public and Academic libraries as it would support plans for library development and input to improving services rendered to children. This study **would** also serve as literature/reference material, for researchers in the future and input to the literature available in this area of study. The study would also be very important to the general public who would like to benefit from the services offered by library services.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

## **2.1 Worldwide Studies**

In this part, the researcher intends to demonstrate how different scholars all over the world had spoken about the usage of social media platforms for **learning and library services** in higher learning institutions.

Bakare (2018) states that “Using social media platforms to administer, distribute and disseminate information can greatly attract users and promote library usage in this information jet moving age. Library services can now be available to users on the go, anytime and anywhere, which has totally redefined Library services from the walls of the Library to the boundless spaces of the World Wide Web”. Many studies were conducted on the utilization of social media in the library where by. A survey undertaken by Booker and Pachysandra (2017) asked “library users about their social media habits and preferences. His finding study show that the majorities of respondents use social media platforms and think it is important for the library to have a social media presence. However, Users under age 35 prefer to get information from the library webpage or the newsletter before social networking sites”.

Another study was conducted in America whereby Elia (2019) explores “a study America on how academic libraries have used social media for broadcasting information, responsive communication, and engagement. The study revealed that many libraries focus on the marketing aspect of social media since it is a successful method of promoting events, services, and resources”.

Pekka, Georgios, and Kerstin (2020) went far in their study on the impact of social media on knowledge work in Canada. Their study discloses and highlights which specific aspects, areas, and tasks of knowledge work can be improved by the use of social media. Moreover, the results of their study show that social media can improve knowledge work, knowledge building, and maintenance tasks in which communication; information sharing, and collaboration play a vital role.

## **2.2 Africa Studies**

In Africa Bakare (2018) conducted a study to determine the use of social media platforms to promote library services and profitable Librarianship in Nigeria. For this study, the descriptive survey research method was used. The sample for this study consisted of 200 students at the

National Open University of Nigeria, from 3 selected centers in Kogi State, Nigeria. The study showed that blogs and WhatsApp are the widely used social media platforms for promoting library services in libraries. The results also showed that the use of social media platforms facilitates two-way communication, eases communication with library users, and provides a forum for feedback, increasing library users and financially profiting librarians through traffic generated as users visit their blog pages.

The same study was conducted by Emmanuel (2018) on determining the utilization of social media platforms for promoting library resources and services in Nigerians' tertiary institutions in Cross River State, Nigeria. The descriptive survey research design method was employed for this study. The sample for this study comprised 300 librarians in three Nigerian tertiary institutions in Cross River State. The study revealed that Facebook and Blogs are the most frequently used social media platforms for promoting library resources and services in libraries.

Akporhanor and Olise (2015) carried out a study to determine librarians' use of social media for promoting library and information resources and services in university libraries in South-South, Nigeria. The descriptive survey research design method was employed for this study. The sample for this study comprised 304 librarians in 9 selected university libraries from 3 states of South-South, Nigeria. The study revealed that blogs and Facebook are the most commonly used social media to promote library and information resources and services in libraries. Findings also showed librarians' use of social media promotes two-way communication, makes communication with library users easier, provides a forum for feedback, and increases library users/usage.

### **2.3 Tanzania Studies**

In Tanzania study conducted by Agatha (2020) aimed to investigate the utilization of social media for marketing library resources and services in academic libraries in Tanzania. The objectives of the study were to; determine the level of awareness and perception of library staff towards the use of social media applications in libraries, examine the present status of using social media for marketing library resources and services in academic libraries in Tanzania and determine the problems faced by academic libraries in utilizing social media. The majority of academic libraries have social media accounts. Facebook is the most utilized social media for library marketing. Additionally, findings revealed the issues of time, poor support from management, difficulty administration and monitoring social media accounts, and lack of skilled

personnel to be among the problems facing academic libraries. On the other hand, the study recommends that the library staff should be trained continuously in ICT skills, and the library management should streamline marketing activities in day-to-day library operation.

Another study was conducted in Tanzania by Muneja and Abung(2012) who explores the adoption and application of Web 2.0 tools in delivering library services in selected libraries in Tanzania. The paper investigates the ways in which librarians are adopting the tools to enhance services. The study examines Web 2.0 tools used by libraries in delivering their services, factors influencing the use of Web2.0 tools, and challenges and prospects in their usage. The findings reveal that librarians in Tanzania have started using various Web 2.0 tools in varying degrees and the most common tool is Facebook. The findings also reveal that most librarians are motivated to use these tools because they are free and open source and relatively easy to apply. On another hand findings also show that Sharing resources, communication, and promotion of services were the main reasons why these tools are used. Another side to their specific objectives study reveals that Challenges include unreliable power and internet access. Advantages included an increase in resource awareness, better communication, and interest in library usage. Finally, they suggest that institutions should develop policies that adopt the use of emerging technologies and alternatives to reliable power sources such as solar and generators.

### **3. METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Research design**

Creswell (2009) explains the research design as means of exploring and understanding the meaning, individuals or groups ascribe to social or human problems. The study would involve both quantitative and qualitative research design with **tools** for collecting data, which are interviews and questionnaires for data collection. The study was chosen these methods because of enabling researchers to collect accurate and honest data from the respondents

#### **3.2 Area of the study**

The study was conducted in Universities of Zanzibar specifically SUMAIT University, State University of Zanzibar (SUZA), and Zanzibar University (ZU). The study was chosen in these areas because of getting relevant data to meet the research problem.

#### **3.3 Population of the study**

Kothari (2005) defines a population sample as a number of items to be selected from the universe to constitute a sample, and the size of the sample should neither be neither excessively large nor too small rather it should be optimum. This population was taking 2376 respondents which included Library users (degree students and instructors) and librarians (senior and juniors) of Zanzibar Universities. The reason behind the study was to involve these kinds of the population directly concerned with the research problem.

### 3.3.1 Sample size

The sample size is the sampling that involves the selection of a number of study units from a defined study population (Ketkesone&Phrasisombath, 2009). The study involved 96 respondents who were selected from the Universities of Zanzibar in the study area. Thus, the population of the study was 2376. The study was chosen this size of the sample because of enabling the study to collect adequate data from the population at an appropriate time, also this size was sufficient to get standard data that helped to achieve the research objective. The formula of sample size by Krejcie and Morgan was used below

$$N = \frac{N \times CV^2}{\{CV^2 + (N-1)\}}$$

Where:-

n=Samplesize

N=Targetpopulation

CV=Co-efficient ofvariation whichistaken as0.5

e=Toleranceatthe desiredlevelwhich istakenat 0.05orat 95%confidencelevel

$$n = \frac{2376 \times 0.5^2}{0.5^2 + (2376 - 1)0.05^2}$$

$$n = \frac{594}{0.25 + 5.94 - 0.0025}$$

$$n = 96$$

### **3.3.2 Sampling technique**

Sampling is a process of selecting of subset of the individual to estimate the characteristics of the whole population. (Encyclopedia, 2008). The study applied non-probability sampling techniques to select a sample of 96 respondents who are senior librarians, junior librarians, and users of the Academic Library. Purposive sampling and random **sampling were used to select a sample of the respondents who access and promote library services in the study area.** The study was chosen this technique since there is no bias in allowing every member of the population to have an equal chance of being selected as a sample for research. Hence this was contrary when compared to other techniques such as the purposive sampling technique.

### **3.4 Data collection methods**

#### **3.4.1 Questionnaire**

This study used closed questions to users of Academic Library and library staff from selected Universities Libraries in Zanzibar. The questionnaire was divided into four (4) sections which were the demographic section, social media platforms section, uses of social media platforms, and challenges facing social media platforms section.

#### **3.4.2 Interview**

An interview is an effective method for data collection that involves a direct conversation between the interviewee and interviewer (Kothari, 2005). This study employed the interview method to obtain the relevant primary data from the study area. The interview was questioned by librarians. Oral questioning and open discussion (direct contact through face-to-face interaction) techniques will be employed to make more analysis concerning the roles of the Academic Library in the usage of social media platforms used for knowledge sharing on learning and library services in Zanzibar higher institutions.

## **4. Result and Discussion**

The results show that many respondents from higher institutions are aware enough of the social media platforms as shown in the data below:

Table 1: Knowledge on the social media platforms

<b>a. Knowledge of social media platforms</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Do you know social media platforms?	80(93.02%)	6(6.977%)
Do your libraries share knowledge with the users	77(89.5%)	9(10.5%)

#### **b. Ways of sharing knowledge**

The results of this study also showed that there are several ways in which academic library share knowledge and the study show that most academic library share knowledge with their users by providing Knowledge on the proper way of reaching specific materials as 40(46.5%) of respondents said, while 23(26.7%) of respondents said through providing knowledge on searching technique whereas 11(12.8%) of respondents said through training users on how to use library resources however 10(11.6%) of respondents said through making aware the users on information literacy.

The finding of this study strongly connected with Okonedo and Popoola, (2012) stated that Knowledge sharing enables librarians to share their insight and experiences in order to allow for fast, efficient, and effective provision of information services to their users. Sharing knowledge involves learning, understanding, extending, and repeating the information, the ideas, the views, and the resources among persons, connected on a specific ground.

#### **c. Purpose of using social media platforms in higher institution**

The study wanted to know the purpose of using social media platforms in higher Institutions and results **from questionnaires** revealed that 57(66.3%) of respondents said the purpose of using social media platforms in higher Institutions is to make discussions with fellow and prepare for examinations while 18(20.9%) of them said doing class work and revision of notes yet 11(12.8%) of **respondents** said Reading. Both qualitative and quantitative data of this finding support Waddell and Barnes, (2012) who said that the main purpose of social media according to my view is to keep staff and patrons updated on daily activities, like frequently updated collections. Users can utilize this platform to type in short messages or status updates.

#### **d. The availability and uses of social media platforms**

The results show that social media platforms are available and used in higher institutions since a good number of respondents agreed on their availability as the table below illustrates:

Table 2: **what are the types of social media platforms used on learning and library**

**services for knowledge sharing in higher learning institutions in Zanzibar?**

Type of social media platforms	Available	Not available	Not sure
<b>1. Facebook</b>	70(81.4%)	7(8.1%)	9(10.5%)
<b>2. WhatsApp</b>	64(74.4%)	6(7.0%)	16(18.6%)
<b>3. Blogs</b>	50(58.1%)	14(16.3%)	22(25.6%)
<b>4. LinkedIn</b>	36(41.9%)	10(11.6%)	40(46.5%)
<b>5. Twitter</b>	30(34.9%)	8(9.3%)	48(55.8%)
<b>6. YouTube</b>	50(58.1%)	6(7.0%)	30(34.9%)
<b>7. Telegram</b>	35(40.7%)	9(10.5%)	42(48.8%)

The findings show that social media platforms are highly used on learning and library services for knowledge sharing in higher learning institutions in Zanzibar as the table below displays:

Table 3: The Uses of Social Media Platforms

The Uses of Social Media Platforms	Yes	No	Uncertain
Speed up the services directly to the users	55(64.0%)	20(23.3%)	11(12.8%)
Building discussion groups and collaborative work	65(75.6%)	18(20.9%)	3(3.5%)
Marketing library products and services	70 (81.4%)	8 (9.3%)	8 (9.3%)
Reaching mass audiences of potential users	60(69.8%)	8(9.3%)	18(20.9%)
Modernizing the library image and e-reputation	71(82.6%)	6(7.0%)	9(10.5%)

The findings show that there are several challenges facing social media platforms used on learning and library services for knowledge sharing in Zanzibar higher institutions but the most common one is a Lack of Computer Expertise as shown in the table below:

Table 4: The Challenges Facing Social Media Platforms

The Challenges Facing Social Media Platforms	Strongly agree/Agree	Disagree	Neutral
Lack of Computer Expertise	100%	0%	0%

Lack of Fund for new technology	57%	2.3%	12.8%
Poor knowledge of managing and using electronic records	8.1%	72.1%	19.8%
Poor support from the management	14.0%	15.1%	70.9%
Unreliable power supply	34.9%	25.6%	39.5%

## 5. CONCLUSION

Social media provide more chances for interaction, connection, sharing, and communication with library users in the library. Libraries could use social media to market their services and resources using different platforms. For example, they inform users about new library events and newly acquired collections. Libraries could use YouTube videos to train the users on how to search materials in the library workshops can be marketed by using Facebook, and Twitter.

Many have been explained in chapter four about the usage of social media platforms used for learning and library services for knowledge sharing in Higher Institution Zanzibar. Hence according to the findings, the study revealed that social media platform is very well known by the respondents and daily used in their studies.

On the other hand, the study showed that most libraries use social media to provide services to their users, the purpose of using social media platforms in higher Institutions was to make discussions with fellow students and prepare for examinations. **Facebook, Twitter, Blogs, LinkedIn, and WhatsApp** social media platforms available and well used for knowledge sharing on learning and library services in higher institutions for disseminating information in their academic Library through using ICT resources.

On another hand According to this finding study showed that the use of social media platforms for knowledge sharing in the library was to speed up the services directly to the users, building up discussion groups and collaborative works, Marketing library products and services, and reaching mass audiences of potential users.

Turning to another page study showed that Lack of Computer Expertise, Lack of Fund for new technology, Poor knowledge of managing and using electronic records, and Poor support from the management are the great challenges facing academic libraries in operating social media

platforms on learning and library services for knowledge sharing in higher institutions Zanzibar as a result of falling to reach many audiences.

### **Recommendation:**

**The study gave a number of recommendations. The recommendations were the management of the library concerned should be improving their network infrastructures including purchasing power and full bandwidth that can serve a large population from the university so as to satisfy the needs of the university members because during observation the study observed that there is a poor network connection. Recommendation number two of the study highly recommended that the Institution should find computer experts who could maintain all facilities effectively so as to disseminate information easily through social media. Recommendation number three of the study respectively recommended that the library should provide enough budgets so as to find enough facilities for performing electronic libraries such as printers, typewriters, photocopiers, scanners, and even computers.**

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