

ABSTRACT

The study intended to assess cyber security awareness among social media users in Tanzania. The study specifically aimed to i) determine the level of awareness on cybersecurity issues among social media users in Tanzania ii) assess risky practices among social media users that may expose them to cyber crimes and iii) propose best practices for using social media to avoid cyber attack. A cross-sectional study design was used involving 92 youth aged 17 to 45 years living in Handeni District, Tanga Region. The study participants were recruited using convenience sampling method to obtain the desired number of participants in a short period of time. Data collection was done using a structured questionnaire which was administered to each participant. The collected data was analysed quantitatively using descriptive statistics with the help of a statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) version 20 software.

Majority, 91.3%(84/92) of respondents chose social media as their primary activity when using internet. Overall, 66.3% (61/92) of the respondents knew about cyber fraud, none of the respondents admitted to have been a victim of online fraud. Also majority, 83.7% (77/92) knew that giving their data to the internet can expose them to online crime and frauds. Furthermore, more than a half, 53.3% (49/92) of the respondents knew that personal data (such as account password) can be stolen when you access public WiFi. However, more than a half, 47.8% (44/92) responded that they just use a simple password such as birthdays or anniversary dates because it is easier to remember, while 25% (23/92) said they ignore the recommended safety recommendations because it is complicated. Based on these findings, it is recommended that education on safe use of Internet and social media should be provided to the users to minimize the risks of being victims of cyber crimes.

