

## ABSTRACT

This dissertation describes research carried out to investigate the impact of social media networks on education in higher learning institutions. This research is worth exploring since there is a great number of higher learning students in Arusha and Tanzania at large who are using social media such as Facebook in their daily social and academic life and for the past 10 years the usage and adoption of social media have and is increasing tremendously. Most of these higher learning students spend a great amount of time on Facebook which in turn increase or decreases their concentration on academic issues and performances.

The aim of this research was to investigate the impact of social media networks on education in higher learning institutions and the objectives of this study were to investigate the linkage between students' performance with usage of social media networks, to investigate linkage between the number of hours student spend reading against the number of hours used in social networks and to investigate the association of social network media usage based on gender. The research tried to answer three hypotheses which were; Students using social media networks for academic purpose have better performance, an average of two hours per day in social media network is enough for better performance, women using social media networks for academic purpose perform better than men using social media networks for academic purposes. The research used a case study approach and quantitative method and t-independent sample test to test the stated hypotheses. The research used questionnaire and interview method of primary data collection method and managed to get response from 60 students from different higher learning students as a sample. This research used legitimate scientific not to prove the stated hypotheses are true but rather to see and find out whether it's true or not.

The study revealed that social media has an impact on education and students' performance both positively and negatively depending on the intent of the student and the student use of social media in higher learning institutions.

The study therefore, recommends that a limit or ban on social media use to higher learning student in some extent should be applied so as to reduce or remove the negative impact of social media on education and students' performance and the positive impact of social media on education and student performance should be emphasized, facilitated and enhanced so as to provide a better education system through the use of social media.

