

Rethinking the Usefulness of Twitter in Higher Education

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ABSTRACT Research has been abundant in generating studies on pedagogical revolution and innovation via technology in higher education institutions, specifically the incorporation of social media in pedagogical practice. The potential for using social media has been proven in studies around the world. The objective of this study was to examine the usefulness of Twitter as a communication tool in Information Technology courses taken by students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) in the Durban region of South Africa. The methodology for this qualitative study is a design-based research. Findings overall showed that students preferred more traditional ways of academic support such as face-to-face conversations, telephone calls and emails rather than using Twitter to communicate with their Academic Development Officer or their peers. Conclusions drawn from the study indicate that the way social media is used in higher education should be reconsidered and used only to complement traditional practices.