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Awareness and Use of Social Media Among Librarians in Public Universities in Ogun State, Nigeria.

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**AWARENESS AND USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA AMONG LIBRARIANS IN PUBLIC
UNIVERSITIES IN OGUN STATE, NIGERIA.**

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Abstract

The advent and application of information technology (ICT) to academic libraries functions and services have brought about a revolution in library patrons' attitudes and needs, revolutions in library services and changes in librarian job functions. One of the tools of ICT that have influenced academic libraries is social media tools. This study investigated the awareness and use of social media among academic librarians of the Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta (FUNAAB) and Olabisi Onabanjo University (OOU). A descriptive survey method was employed for the study. The sample size for this study comprised of 40 academic librarians and questionnaire was used for data collection. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data collected. The findings of the study revealed that most of the social media are commonly used by librarians in promoting library and information resources and services. However, major constraints to social media usage include poor internet access, epileptic power supply and lack of enough bandwidth. Hence, recommendations were made; these include the provision of internet facilities in all offices in the library and an uninterrupted power supply for library staff amongst others.

Keywords: Social media, Academic librarians, University libraries, Academic libraries, library patrons.

Introduction

Science and technology have brought about marvelous development and change in almost all walks of life. Information Communication and Technology (ICT) has saturated our work and lives. The emergence of information technology which includes social media has brought a change in librarian services rendering and users' attitude towards the way library resources is being used. The effectiveness and efficiency of the library today cannot be underestimated; this is because of the advent of information communication and technology. Information communication and technology is a fruit or source that brings out a seed that has a lot of seedlings. Social media is one of its seeds that has different seedlings like social networks as one of its tools. Social media is understood to mean web-based technologies for social interaction using highly accessible techniques to transform and broadcast media monologues into social dialogues. According to Merriam-Webster, Social Media is a form of electronic communication (as Web sites for social networking) through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content (as videos). Social media is also the creation and maintenance of personal and business relationships especially online (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and so on). Adewonjo (2016) identify the five motives of using social media as meeting new people, entertainment, maintaining relationships, social events and media creation. In summary, all web-based applications that allow interaction between the users and exchange of user-generated content are referred to as social media.

Academic libraries are generally located on the campus of colleges and universities. Their major function is to serve the students, academic staff and research fellows. These are post-secondary educational libraries that provide resources and research support for students and faculty members of the institution. The librarians provide different services to library users. Services such as lending, provision of seating and study facilities, reference, users' education, selective dissemination of information and so on. Library services can be more efficient and effective with the advent of information communication and technology (ICT). Islam and Islam (2006) stated that Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is a heterogeneous collection of industry and service activities including information technology (IT), equipment & services, media,

information service provision, libraries, commercial information providers, network-based services and related professional specialised services.

The progress of information technology has brought about a change in public university libraries operations especially in the area of social media tools. Thus, librarians are challenged with the awareness and responsibility of acquiring new skills and knowledge on application and use of information technology tools especially social networks such as Facebook, Blog, Twitter, Whatsapp, LinkedIn and YouTube to enable them to support library services among the users. It is on this ground that the study seeks to examine the awareness and use of social media among librarians in the Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta (FUNAAB) and Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago - Iwoye (OOU). Two public universities are owned by Federal and State governments in Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

Social media is the means of communicating with library users on the internet using various information communication tools. The introduction of social media to academic libraries has brought about revolutions in library services and changes in librarians' job functions. It is expected that the use of social media will enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of librarians' towards the services rendered to the patrons. However, observations have shown that social media has not been helpful to librarians' in terms of their service delivery. This may be due to lack of awareness, lack of proper training or some other challenges that are affecting the use of social media. Hence, this study investigates awareness and use of social media among librarians in Nimbe Adedipe Library, Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta and Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago-Iwoye Library.

Objectives of the study

The objectives of the study are to:

1. examine the level of awareness of social media among librarians in public universities in Ogun State;
2. assess the extent of use of social media among librarians in public universities in Ogun State;

3. determine the motivating factors of the usage of social media by librarians and;
4. find out the constraints to the use of social media librarians in public universities in Ogun State.

Research Questions

1. What is the level of awareness of social media among librarians in public universities in Ogun State?
2. What is the extent of the use of social media by librarians in public universities in Ogun State?
3. What are the motivating factors to the use of social media by librarians in public universities in Ogun State?
4. What are the constraints to the use of social media by librarians in public universities in Ogun State?

Literature Review

Amobi (2014) defined Social media as web-based platforms that individuals create to exchange information and ideas, keep in touch with friends, conduct research and so on. In this regard, Boyd and Ellison (2007) defined social media sites as “web-based services that allow individuals to construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, articulate a compilation of additional users with whom they share a connection, view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system”. Social media is not about creation and maintenance only but also provides a platform for research and interaction for users. Dickson and Holley (2010) opined that the common social media used in academic libraries are typical websites like blogs, wikis, Facebook and social bookmarking websites. This implies that social media incorporates the provision of information and also enable users to interact with each other.

Social media provides a chance to enjoy user-to-user communication and distinguishes from traditional media which is characterized by top-down news dissemination arrangement (Clark and Aufderheide, 2009). In the same light, Ogbe (2014) described social media as “an online media that takes communication beyond the restraint of the traditional media”. They are interactive web-based platforms that offer librarians the opportunity and place to connect, share

opinions, experiences, views, contacts, knowledge and expertise (Okoro and Nwafor, 2013). In addition, Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) also explained Social media as “a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content, the social network consists of various user-driven marketing channels, e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Blogs, WhatsApp and it has several benefits to librarian and users.

Facebook is a popular free social media website that gives chance to registered users to create their profiles. It is a tool that can be used by librarians to disseminate information. Potter (2011) affirmed Facebook to be used for marketing libraries and information centres in several ways. Through the Facebook account, librarians can draw users’ attention to valuable concealed resources of the library that library patrons are not aware of, such as grey literature, current awareness resources and reserve resources. If time is restricted, Facebook can be occupied via other platforms such as Twitter feedback, the library calendar, and library Blog. Also, OPAC search can be rooted on the Facebook page for ease of library users (Adewonjo, 2016). Gallardo (2013) also advocates that the ideal practices for librarian Facebook page are to stay to the point, pin important posts to the top of your page, be casual and conversational, use images, post consistently, post the same types of content on the same day of the week, give fans access to elite information, find your best time to post and take advantage of awareness.

Twitter is another display place for frequently updating collections, new arrival, current content services of the library and advertising library services. Waddell and Barnes (2012) note that the simplicity of posting and sharing information on Twitter makes it a vital tool for libraries to reach their users. Librarians’ can use this display place to give patrons firsthand information on the ongoing events. This indicates that users send in queries and get feedback from librarians. Twitter can be used to keep librarians and patrons updated on the library’s daily activities; for example, regularly updated library collections. Users can exploit this display place to type in short messages or status updates. Ezeani and Igwesi (2012) affirm that Twitter can create library service alerts.

The blog is an important social media that enables librarians to market and promote their library activities and services. Ekoja (2011) expressed that blogs are very helpful in promoting library

services like new acquisitions, opening hours, library events and programmes, online discussions and so on. Dickson and Holley (2010) add that librarians can display news about the library as well as events happening in the library. This implies that there is a need for regular updating of the blogs in order to keep the librarian as well as patrons inform of available library services and resources. Blogs permit librarian to occasionally post messages, share information on a particular subject matter and let users comment or contribute to the subject matter that is being discussed and expect instant feedback (Ezeani and Igwesi, 2012).

WhatsApp is yet another social media stage that allows contact between librarians and their colleagues and also promotes library services to patrons. WhatsApp Messenger is a 'cross-platform messaging application which allows users to exchange messages without having to pay for SMS' (WhatsApp.com, 2012). The application is compatible with iPhone, BlackBerry, Android, Nokia, and other Windows smartphones. WhatsApp features include one-on-one chat, group chat, push notifications, sending and receiving both video and audio files (Shambare, 2014). By September 2015, it was estimated that WhatsApp had more than 900 million monthly active users up from over 700 million in January 2015. The service is one of the most populous mobile apps globally . (Statista, 2015).

There are numerous studies on awareness of social media in academic libraries, among others are; Kwanya, Stillwell and Underwood (2012) reported that Kenyan library staff mentioned that social media enhance interactivity between users and librarians in the process of simplifying flawless communication and feedback. Xu, Ouyang and Chu (2009) also found out that social media can enable collaboration, they offer improved section management through allowing instant communication, and also improve accessibility and integration of cataloguing resources for cataloguing departments. On the other hand, Priolkar and Kumbhar (2015) study on the use of social media sites by library professionals found out that library professionals majorly use Facebook in disseminating information to users of the library.

The study on the use of social networking tools in academic libraries in Hong Kong (Chu and Du, 2013). The study adopted a survey questionnaire for data collection which was sent to 140 libraries. According to the study, it was clear that through the use of social media,

librarians have been able to launch a level of commitment with their colleagues. This has ensured that they are updated with the latest news and new trends within their profession. Mitchell and Watstein (2007) submitted that the present reference and information literacy library staff have a unique opportunity to step up to the complex challenge of visibility in online vicinity (such as Facebook) based on the fact that these online environments are and scholars where students and scholars exist. Irrespective of the benefits of social media as stated above, there are some challenges to the use of social media by librarians in public and State universities in Ogun State, Nigeria. Ezeani and Igwesi, (2012) acknowledged that Social media provide important opportunities to libraries as it aids marketing library and information services. The study identified the challenges faced by universities libraries in the use of Social media tools as lack of awareness of Social media, lack of trained staff, lack of government intervention, bandwidth problem, and unreliable power supply. The consistent power failure increases the cost of running the library making it difficult for librarians' to use social media for marketing library and information services in Nigerian university libraries (Ossai- Ugbah, 2012). In the same light, Shehu, Urhefe, and Aworo (2015) in their study of accessibility and utilisation of internet service in Nigerian libraries highlighted several challenges faced by the staff while accessing the internet in Nigerian libraries. The mass of their respondents revealed that epileptic power supply and inaccessibility of the internet were some of the challenges facing staff while accessing the internet in Nigerian libraries. This study, therefore, set to investigate awareness and use of social media among Librarians in Ogun State Public Universities.

Research Methodology

The study adopted a survey research design. A structured questionnaire titled awareness and use of academic social media among Librarians in public universities in Ogun State was used. Two public universities which include Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta (56) and Olabisi Onabanjo, University, Ago-Iwoye (42) were used for this study. The population sample of the study consists of 98 librarians. 40% of the total population estimated was used as a sample size for the study using sample size determinant by Kretcie and Morgan table. A total of 40 copies of the questionnaire were randomly distributed, 28 copies were returned which amounted to a 70% response rate. This percentage of questionnaire response rate is acceptable as it is over 65%. The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics.

Data Analyses, Results and Findings

Demographic characteristics of the Respondents

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents according to Institutions

Name of the Universities	Numbers administered	Numbers Retrieved	Percentage
Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta (FUNAAB)	22	18	81.8
Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago – Iwoye (OOU)	18	10	55.6
Total	40	28	70

Table 1 indicates that 18 (81.8%) librarians responded from the Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta and 10 (55.6%) responded from Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago-Iwoye.

Table 2: Educational level of the Respondents

Educational Level	Frequency	Percent
Bachelor Degree	10	35.7
Master Degree	9	32.1
PhD	3	10.8
Others	6	22.4
Total	28	100.0

Source: fieldwork (2018)

From Table 2, majority of the respondents have bachelor degrees 10 (35.7%), followed by Masters with 9 (32.1%), then PhD 3(10.8%) and others 6 (22.4%). This indicates that majority of the librarian are professionals as they have their degrees in librarianship.

Table 3: Distribution of Respondents by Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	17	60.7
Female	11	39.3
Total	28	100.0

Source: fieldwork (2018)

Table 3, shows that majority of the respondents are males 17 (60.7%) while females are 11 (39.3%). This indicates that male respondents are more than females.

Research questions raised for the study were answered using the data obtained from the field.

Research Question 1: What is the level of awareness of social media among librarians in public universities in Ogun State?

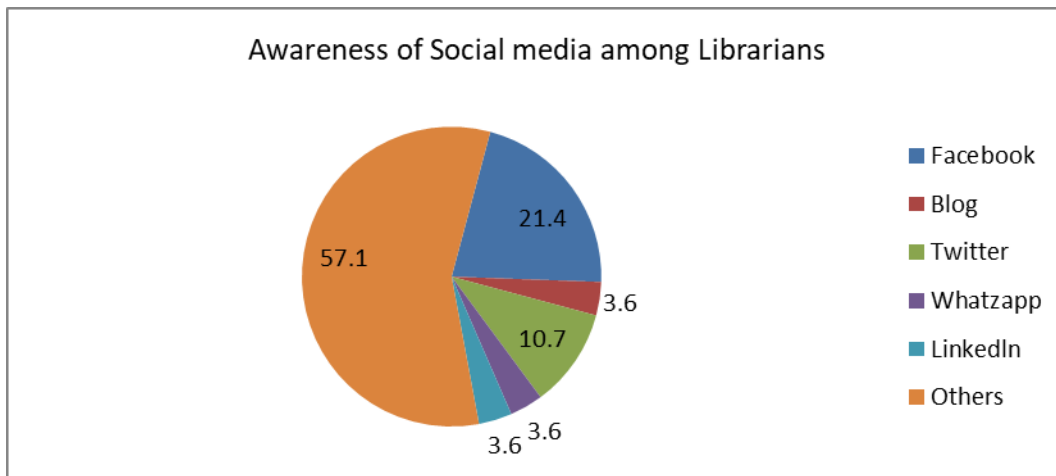


Figure1: Awareness of social network

Figure 1 indicates that 16(57.1%) of the librarians are aware of other social media; 6 (21.4%) of them are aware of Facebook; 3respondents (10.7%) are aware of Twitter. There was nominal awareness of Blog 1(3.6%), WhatsApp 1(3.6%) and LinkedIn 1(3.6%) among the librarian. This discovery was not in cooperation with the discovery of Draper and Turnage (2008) who found out that Blogs were mostly used by librarian inpromoting library services.

Research Question 2: What is the extent of use of social media among librarians in public universities in Ogun State?

Table 4: Which of the social media do you use often?

Social Network	Extent of use	Percent
Facebook	7	25.0
Blog	4	14.3
LinkedIn	1	3.6
All of the above	16	57.1
Total	28	100.0

Table 4 shows that librarian often make use of the entire social media in disseminating information. In this regard, Mitchell and Watstein (2007) who asserted that today's reference and information literacy library staff have a unique opportunity to step up to the multifaceted challenge of visibility' in online environs (such as Facebook) based on the fact that these online environments are the places where students and scholars exist.

Research Question 3: What are the motivating factors to the use of social media?

Table 5: Motivating factors to the use of social media

Activities	Frequency	Percent
Keeping track with current trends in library	10	35.7
Promoting library service	3	10.7
Selective Dissemination of Information	7	25.0
All of the above	8	28.6
Total	28	100.0

Table 5 shows that librarian in Ogun state public universities are motivated to use social media in order to keep the track with current trends in library 10 (35.7%). They also use it for other

services 8 (28.6%) and Selective dissemination of information 7 (25%). This result is in alliance with that of Chu and Du (2013) who reported that through the use of social media, librarians have been able to launch a degree of commitment with their colleagues. This has ensured that they are updated with the latest trends within their career.

Research Question 4: What are the constraints in the usage of social media?

Table 6: Constraints in the usage of social media by librarians in public universities in Ogun State

	Strongly Disagree	Strongly Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Agree	Total %
There are lack of skills and personnel knowledge	4(14.3%)	3 (10.7%)	2 (7.1%)	9 (32.1%)	10 (35.7%)	100
There are lack of awareness of social networks	2 (7.1%)	7 (25.0%)	4 (14.3%)	15(53.6%)	-	100
Epileptic power supply has been the problem	-	28(100%)	-	-	-	100
Low bandwidth is a contributing factor to internet problem	-	27(96.4%)	1(3.6%)	-	-	100
Poor internet service has been the major factor	-	13(46.4%)	-	-	15(53.6%)	100

Table 6 indicates that some of the major constraints to social media usage include epileptic power supply. The entire 28 respondents (100%) affirmed this. Others include assignment of low bandwidth with 27 (96.4%) and poor internet service 13 (46.6%). This finding is in line with Ezeani and Igwesi, (2012) whose study identified the challenges faced by Nigerian libraries in the use and awareness of Social Media as lack of trained staff, lack of government intervention, bandwidth problem, technophobia, and unreliable power supply. The result also corroborate with the findings of Shehu, Urhefe, and Aworo (2015). Their study on accessibility and utilisation of internet service in Nigeria libraries highlighted several challenges faced by the personnel while accessing the internet in Nigeria libraries. Majority of their respondents indicated power outage

and unavailability/inaccessibility of internet were some of the challenges facing personnel while accessing the internet in Nigeria libraries.

Discussion of Results

The findings of the study revealed that among the social media tools, members of staff in the library were aware of Facebook, WhatsApp, and Twitter. This finding disagrees with that of Draper and Turnage (2008) who found out that Blogs were mostly used by library staff in promoting library services.

In assessing the extent of social network usage by librarians in Ogun state public universities, it was revealed that they mostly use WhatsApp and Facebook daily in rendering services to users and this finding supported with that of Priolkar and Kumbhar (2015) who reported that library professionals mostly use Facebook in disseminating information. In this regard, Mitchell and Watstein (2007) asserted that today's reference and information literacy librarian have a distinctive prospect to stride up to the complex challenge of visibility' in online environments (such as Facebook) based on the detail that these online environments are the places where students and scholars exist. In addition, librarians' uses social media for reference services, Selective Dissemination of Information and keeping track with current trends in the library. This finding is in agreement with that of Chu and Du (2013) who reported that through the use of social media, librarians have been able to establish a degree of engagement with their colleagues.

Conclusively, findings from the study also revealed that some major constraints to social network awareness and usage include poor internet access, irregular power supply and lack of enough bandwidth.

Conclusion

Social media usage is essential in public university libraries as it will help librarians keep themselves abreast of new ideas in their career and further aids to provide services that will meet the varying needs of their patrons. Based on the results of the study it could be seen that librarian in Ogun state public universities libraries make use of most of all the social media tools in communicating and providing library and information services to users. Even, with this, librarians need to fully utilize other social network tools and as such there is a need for proactive

awareness and training to educate librarian. However, challenges such as poor internet access, epileptic power supply, lack of enough bandwidth and lack of management support were issues that must be addressed critically in order to obtain utmost benefit from the use of social media.

Recommendations

In order to enhance the effective use of social media among librarians in public universities in Ogun State for promoting library and information resources and services; the following recommendations were made:

1. The Ogun state public universities library managements should ensure availability of the internet facilities for all librarians.
2. The libraries should solicit for and make good use of funds from their parent bodies, Federal or State government for internet subscription in their libraries.
3. The libraries should ensure regular and uninterrupted power supply for librarian to enable consistent use of social network in disseminating information to library users.
4. Lastly, university library management should support their staff by motivating them to attend workshops, conferences and seminars in order for them to update their skills on all the various social network and keep informed with current technological trends.

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