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BABASOLA OGUNADE LAW LIBRARY, NIGERIA**

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**SOCIAL MEDIA USE AND APPLICATION DURING COVID-19 BY SPECIAL
LIBRARIES IN NIGERIA: CASE STUDY OF JUSTICE BABASOLA OGUNADE LAW
LIBRARY, NIGERIA**

BY

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Abstract

This study examines the use of social media during covid-19 by the Justice Babasola Ogunade Law Library of Ajayi Crowther University, Oyo State, Nigeria.

In achieving the set objectives for this study, Focus Group Discussion (FGD) was conducted among the six staff of the Hon. Justice Babasola Ogunade Law Library, Ajayi Crowther University, Nigeria. For the purpose of ensuring that the discussion revolved round the intended construct. The researchers made use of prepared structured questions and checklists that made the process of data collection easier.

Findings from the study (95% of the respondents) revealed that the law library had over the years embraced the use of social media in the marketing of its services to the library users. More so, the study further observed that even though social media is very useful in the dissemination of information, 60% of the respondents agreed that only few of the social media platforms are currently in use by the law library. Equally, the deployment of social media is confronted by a number of inhibiting factors mostly during the pandemic including but not limited to erratic electricity and internet supplies; lack of experience in the use of social media and poor internet connectivity in Oyo environs.

In the light of the problems identified, solutions were proffered. It is believed that with access to trainings on social media usage by the library staff, the services rendered in the library might be more effectively utilized. The study also recommended that libraries should develop social pages for maximum exploitation of library services.

Key words: *Covid-19, Library services, Nigeria, Social Media, Special libraries.*

INTRODUCTION

World over, social media has become marketable commodity that everyone has to afford for daily lives. There is a paradigm shift from traditional information to social media information culture. Erik Qualman (2009) describes social media as the era of quick communication and transparency calling it the glasshouse effect. He refers it as the instrument to work on the huge information on the Internet: a way to “extract” the information you are really searching for. Users of social media can now communicate and interact with immediate environment and world over of this great media introduction and make one appear in a global village.

These applications are now created and produced for users based on the engaging and reacting of contemporary consumers’ need to involve the entire new brand by taking consumers views into consideration. Thus, Industries got feedbacks from costumers via use of social media to know if the product is satisfactory or not. More so, there are plethora applications of social media in the world today as its usage and Application has become indispensable in different communities, especially during covid-19 pandemic such as institutions, homes, libraries and information center, for the provision of quick reference services, marketing of information products and instant information dissemination like news.

The paradigm shift brought to bear in human communication and interaction social media use and applications has rubbed off on different forms of libraries across the globe of which libraries in Nigeria are not an exception, most especially special libraries created to cater for a specific user community by marketing varied information products and services. This was greatly necessitated amid COVID – 19 to curtail the spread of the virus when face-to-face interaction was prohibited and libraries had to migrate to the social media space to market their products to the

clienteles. It is on this premise that this paper examined the use of social media by library staff at the Justice Babasola Ogunade Law Library domiciled in Ajayi Crowther University Oyo State, Nigeria for marketing their information services and social networking products in order to maximize information use clienteles amid COVID – 19 pandemic. This was necessitated by the paradigm shift from traditional library services to web 2.0 which has impacted library services being rendered to users, the manner in which these services now rendered that is expected not to be constrained by time, means and location due to the ubiquitous nature of social media technologies (Bakare 2018).

Objectives of the Study

This paper examined and analyzed how Social Media was used and its application on staff of Justice Babasola Ogunade Law Library, Ajayi Crowther University. The specific objectives were to:

- find out the use of social media during covid-19 pandemic by law library staff in the marketing of its services to the library users.
- assess the problems faced by library professionals in utilizing social media in the special libraries.
- proffer solutions to the challenges confronting the use of social media by law libraries in the dissemination of information to their users.

Literature review

In Nigeria, Ezeani & Igwesi (2012) considered how Nigerian libraries can exploit Social Media skills to offer dynamic library services. The scholars acknowledged that Social Media offers

monumental opportunities to libraries. Professional Librarians can use these Social Media platforms for marketing library and information services. This study ascertains the challenges that faced by libraries in Nigerian to use Social Media such as Users lack awareness of Social Media, lack of trained personnel, paucity of Government intervention, bandwidth challenge, technophobia, and epileptic power supply.

Michael (2015) explained that while social networking sites have been employed to provide effective and efficient reference and user services to users in some university libraries globally, link and connect librarians to clientele, similarly media also use in marketing of library information resources and services. He also examined the challenges in the social media in academic libraries for marketing purposes and the study further showed that these applications enhances knowledge sharing, ensure information updates to library users, and provide group discussion.

More so, Collins and Quan-Haase (2012) described the adoption and use patterns of social media tools by academic libraries in Canada. The emphases of the study was on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Flickr which were seen as the most common tools in social media in Canada. Findings from the revealed Twitter was the most common used social media among the academic libraries, followed by Facebook while least used was You tube and flickr was not used at all.

The study of Mamatha and Nikam (2016) identified advantages of using Twitter in the library as itemized by including information sharing, librarians connecting with colleagues, friends and students during workshop and conferences without visiting the site. Library can also send brief messages for requests and receive instant responses. In the same vain, the study of Bakare (2018) on the use of Social Media Technologies (SMTs) in the Provision and video sharing tools were the first set of three used SMTs by academic librarians in the surveyed universities. The aversion to

the use of Podcast in the high number of academic libraries (79.8%) who claimed they never used it regularly. One of the most revealing facts, about the frequent of usage, was the high percentage of respondents who claimed they never used Blog, Microblogs Collaborative tools, Podcast, Social tagging and bookmarking, Scheduling and meeting tools as frequently as possible.

According to Oxford Dictionary (2013) referred Social Media as “websites and applications that allow users to form and share content or to participate in Social Networking”. Bradley (2012) in the other hand sees Social Media as “the use of web-based and mobile technologies change communication into an interactive dialogue”.

Students through social media can learn how to interact with library personnel who are readily available to provide them with the requisite services irrespective of their location.

The study of Bakare (2018) who sample 222, 4th year computer Science Students from six Universities from South-west Nigeria revealed respondents attested to the fact that they aware of mechanisms of using Social Media Technologies (SMT) in accessing library services provided in the library. Some of these are through smart-phones (27.4%) desktops (26.5%), laptops (25.1%) and other related means, which fall under the purview of others (20.9%) the implication of these revelations is that outside the listed means of accessing the library services, there are other mechanisms that are available to access SMT based Library Services. The study further revealed that majority (33%) of the students access these SMT Library Services right in their classrooms or lecture theaters, while the least in terms of access points of these services is Off-campus (3.7%) the most interesting revelation is that the point of accessibility of the SMT services were majorly (76.2%) within the library itself which was ranked third with (23.7%).

More importantly, social media improve learning opportunities for both students of secondary and higher institution learning by connecting them together to solve their assignment or projects.

Telegram, WhatsApp and other similar social media applications allow students to come together after class or school hour outside the class time and share ideas about their assignments or lecture. In fact during Covid 19 pandemic, some of the schools or institutions have successfully used blogs, You tube, Telegram, WhatsApp, just to mention few; as their teaching tools to impact knowledge into their students both during and after school time.

Social Media such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Blog, and Twitter are being used to build relationships, connection and knowledge sharing with user groups; all these are to promote activities of libraries and to offer information services uninterrupted.

However, executing these sites by library staff was found to be challenged as a result of limited time, the social nature of the platforms, tone of content and perceived inadequacy of the staff to keep pace with the development of technology. A bane that has been discussed globally in literature and most especially within the Nigerian space. (Chu & Du, 2013, Ayiah & Kumah, 2011, McCallum, 2015, Akporhonor & Olise, 2015; Bakare, 2018).

Types of Social Media

The cyber landscape is awash with plethora of Social Media applications as they give room for opportunities to connect the user community to access different library products, target specific audiences and give users a chance to interact with the library at real time. In the area of marketing library products and information services, the common and most-widely used Social Media platforms are the following:

Facebook: Facebook is one of most popular Social Media platform that many professional librarians or information professionals, in fact as 95% of them use to create library awareness and marketing. According to (Chu & Do, 2013; Du Toit, 2013; Dowd, 2013; Mundt, 2013; Bakare,

2018). It is a very popular one and free social networking website which make registered users to create their profiles, upload and post photos and videos, share messages to rich friends, family and colleagues (Rouse, 2009). Marketing law libraries and information centers in various ways are done through Facebook platform. Also, users' attention are drawn by Librarians to the relevant hidden information resources of the library through Facebook page/account which users might rarely remember or not even aware of, probably such as grey literature. Libraries can populate their Facebook pages via other platforms such as Instagram links, Twitter feedback, the library calendar, a library Blog. OPAC while search can be embedded on the Facebook page for ease of library users (Potter, 2013).

Twitter: Twitter is another Social Media platform and is the second most popular one. It is called mini-blogging network of particular posts and all the posts are restricted to 140 characters and less. Library staff can updated on daily activities of the library through Twitter, for example, regularly updated library information resources and services. This was corroborated by the study of Walia and Gupta (2012) in their survey of national libraries in the study of sixteen national libraries (57%) revealed these libraries having accounts on Twitter newest updates. Short messages can be posted by users on twitter platform, it can be used for creating library services alerts (Ezeani & Igwesi, 2012).

Blogs: These are one of the oldest social media channels. A blog is also called a weblog or web log, it is a website consisting of entries, which can be called posts that appear in reverse sequential order with the most recent entry appearing first that akin in format to a daily journal (Gunelius, 2014). Blogs are popularly used in libraries to broadcast library news and market other library resources. It is an application that is significant in allowing the library marketing their information products and services as well as allowing users to interact by giving their comments.

Lihitkar and Yadav (2008) made an in-depth study of ten university library blogs, including contact details, content coverage, easy of navigation, external links, and blog archives and the study affirmed blogs have become the most popular online personal publishing platform on the internet used by libraries.

Flickr: This social media application can be used by librarians or uploading photos or image, video management, and sharing library information resources, which is a form of marketing library services to the clientele it can be used to send or share the new arrivals' cover page such as books and periodicals can be disseminated to library users. It can be also be used to enlighten users on to topical issues such as different pictures of the COVID – 19 Pandemic, emblems of the Political parties towards general election in Nigeria, Association, Institution. Ezeani and Igwesi (2012) opined that flickr can also be used to create culture awareness services by the libraries as these generation has high flare for understanding situations through images.

Pinterest: This is an image-based social media tool, free; graphical and an emerging social media application which users use for businesses and it can be used to promote and explore their interest by pinning images and videos on virtual bulletin boards. Pinterest is also “an online Pinboard that enables users to organize and share things” (Gallardo, 2013). Pinterest offers great sites for marketing library resources, which allows libraries create their own profile and makes boards, pinning images as well as video displaying the libraries. In addition in rural Missouri, Central Methodist University (CMU) college library markets its general DVD collection, through a pin board, that assist library users from questions constantly from librarians and offers very best visual representation of what is in the library resources (Dudenhoffer, 2012).

WhatsApp: WhatsApp application was developed by Brian Acton and Jan Koum in 2009 is a branded cross-platform, encrypted, instant messaging (IM) application for smart phones that

allows text messages, images, audio messages, videos, documents, user location, contacts via internet using a mobile number. WhatsApp is a world over social media application and many libraries created WhatsApp platform for marketing library services like creating awareness to users on new arrivals, sharing videos, photos/image helpful and educative. This social media application is greater usage in which users are now for lecture, group discussion, assignment and for providing real time references to users. This is in line with the findings of Karmel Boulos and Weeler (2007) who avowed that IM was harnessed for managing reference services and encourage in-house communication among staff.

Telegram: Telegram Messenger was unveiled in 2013 by Nikolai and Pavel Durov. Currently, users are growing and more than 35 million monthly. All over the world, Millions of people use Telegram to interact with one another. As a result of prevalence of social networks use, it is being applied by academic libraries as a means of communication with faculty members, employees, and students. It can offer a better understanding of user needs and facilitate book introduction and marketing of new services. Telegram users can share text messages, images, videos, presentation, lecture, group discussion and documents (various formats are supported) that are coded and can self-destruct. They can be created by a person and add another person as an administrator where by both of them can broadcast messages to an unlimited number of users or subscribers. No members can add posts to the channel. There is increase in virtual services to library users on the one hand and the frequency of mobile-based social networks like (Telegram, WhatsApp) in the other vain, following Ranganathan's fifth law that says the library is a growing organism. Hence, this social media application pulls greater use of information resources since the time of its discovery, COVID – 19 Pandemic and the Nigerian Libraries.

Methodology

This study employed the use of Focus Group Discussion (FGD) comprising of six staff of Justice Babasola Ogunade Law Library comprising of the Law Librarian, support staff, Porters and Library Assistants on the 15th of January, 2020. Porters and Library Assistants were drafted into the study because, in the actual sense, they relate more with the library users. They also elicit complaints on the services rendered at the law library. Finally, being a specialized library with limited members of staff, the FGD had to incorporate all the staff of the law libraries.

The findings obtained from the information provided during the FGD are further presented below.

The Benefits of Social Media in the provision of Library Services during Pandemic

Findings from FGD indicated the benefits of social media for the provision of library services to include

i. Enlargement of community:

Social media extends the activities of your community by 95% to other community during pandemic by inviting prospect users to access information in your libraries and enjoy your services. This would make informational professional or librarians to experience more value to their communities. It encourages more responses to queries from users about information and others and as a result of this it increases service care of the library.

ii. Promotes access to the use of resources

Social media facilitates good access to information. It is closer to users and enables clientele to exchange experience, assist 95% of users into the library. During covid-19, all prospect episodes

are post with less difficulty by Social media and this post instantly be seen by all students or users/friends through their social media channels.

iii. Increases learning opportunities:

Social media promote library services by 95% through posting of videos or blog about the library. Skype call can be held with author and recorded calls can be shared via social media channels. This helps professional librarians to train interested people or users and reach them to be aware of existing specific information resources at your library. This will go a long way increasing your listeners' productive as you share all these various happenings and activities.

iv. Community involvement:

Social media create a better means to provide feedback by asking your community and to participate with other users in online community which has great influence during pandemic. It helps about 95% of libraries in building collaborative network with the users. Your activities and events with others in their social networks community can easily be shared. The involvement opportunities in social media are varied and these would lead to enhancing your library activities.

v. Facilitate active marketing:

On the part of libraries or professional librarians through social media is a better way of getting specific audience online. Specific clientele based on their demographics and online behavior. Share news with them based on their interest and which they may prefer best to provide respond. It fosters 95% of the library and its activities based on users' interest.

Challenges of Social Media Use

Findings from the FGD indicated that there are challenges in the usage of social media in the library

Benefits of social media are numerous and 95% of benefits to the different community, especially to the library and activities compare to traditional way of sharing information among the libraries or librarians, patrons or online information users. However, there are some of challenges regards to the social media use application in the libraries and even society at large. So, this shown that with 95% of the benefits of social media use and application, there is still 5% who are not of great users of the social media.

Lack of experience in social media use and application by librarians, informational professionals and students. As this is a shady area of social media that one ought to know as using social media and its application grows to a risk to students more often than most adults realize. A challenge of using social media and application that adult mostly scare is cyberbullying or cyberspace and online intimidation in which digital media exploit to communicate false, disgraceful or hatred information about another person is called cyberbully. Online intimidation and cyberbullying is usually looking alike and it is actually two different terms. Online intimidation is only occurring on the net and it is not common as physical intimidation, Students does not always encounter at risk of online intimidation as they partake in social media use and application or social networking. However, while encountering these problems, students are psychologically affected such as fretfulness, desolation, committing suicide.

Another challenge of social media use and application is poor internet connectivity in most libraries. Although, 95% of libraries, librarians and students benefits but 5% of them still have challenges for Posting, sharing or receiving photos, videos which are educative and helpful to students learning, assignment for group discussion through handset, laptop and other computerized devices. There are numbers of youth who have effectively and efficiently failed to use social media

as a result of poor internet connectivity, inadequate of internet bandwidth to the law library. So, the same challenge is being faced by librarians for marketing their library services to the users on social media and some of these services promote users' interest for using the social media like Flickr; libraries use it for sending and sharing the new arrivals' cover page such as books and periodicals can be disseminated to library users, enlighten users on topical issues such as the different pictures of emblems of the Political parties towards general election in Nigeria, Association, Institution, many Public and Academic libraries put this to great use. Flickr can also be used to create current awareness services (Ezeani & Igwesi, 2012). In addition, Funding become major problem of some libraries for internet connectivity to the library which reduce the activities of the libraries to communicate, share, or receive information, messages, videos, photos through Blogs, Facebook, You tube with library users. Furthermore, Epileptic power supply which major challenge in Nigeria as it is affected all the organization or institution therein except those that have alternative power source to enjoy uninterrupted power supply to promote and marketing library services for the users through Social media use and application.

Solutions to the problems confronting the use of social media

As there are 95% of libraries, professionals para- professionals use social media and apply it to marketing their information resources, enlarged community, increases access to the use of resources etc. It is recommended that law libraries should provide training for the library staff including the professionals and the para-professionals. The training can be in-house or sponsored training programmes. Therefore, 5% of users that have problems in the social media use in this paper could be reduced by staff or users training.

It is also essential to provide internet connection in most libraries so that Posting, sharing or receiving photos, videos which are educative and helpful to students learning, assignment for group discussion through handset, laptop and other computerized devices through social media are done. Moreover, those libraries that already have internet connective should increase their bandwidth to ensure adequate use of social media in the law library is achieved among users. Laptop, Smart phones and other computer devices must be provided for the library to enable adequate services. So, funds should be released to special library to solve these challenges

Also, there should be measures to protect users against all forms of abuses by the remaining 5% of users of the media. The Nigerian Communication Commission (NCC) could set up machinery to fight against all forms of negative exposures that users of social media could be exposed to online. It could be knowledge purposes not for sexting which is the act of "Posting, sharing or receiving sexually overt messages, photographs, or pictures through handset, PC, or other computerized devices" including law of anti-social media that was introduced by Federal Republic of Nigeria on 5th November, 2019.

Discussion of Findings

Findings from this study also revealed that the most used social media applications in libraries during COVID – 19 Pandemic is Facebook. 2 respondents agreed in the study of findings. The findings revealed by previous studies (Sahu, 2013; Baro, Edewor & Sunday, 2013; Michael, 2015, Omeluzor, Oyovwe -Tinuoye & Abayomi, 2016) who found out that the most frequently used social media applications by library staff in university libraries was facebook to market law libraries and information centers in various ways are done through Facebook platform. Most librarians who used facebook agreed they used it on a daily basis or weekly. This was because it

is easy to use. So, in the law library, other social media used by library staff in the library were WhatsApp and 2 respondents agreed they used the application during COVID – 19, Telegram 1 respondent agreed the usage of application increased, and also You-tube 1 respondent concur with finding and twitter. However, social media tools such as Pinterest, Podcasts, Myspace and RSS were hardly used by librarian and other library staff. The low usage of these social media tools could be attributed to lack of awareness of these social media applications. The results revealed by Edewor, Okite-Amugboro, Osuchukwu, and Egrejena (2016) who found out that usage of social media for marketing library services was low. But the results do not support the results of the study by Michael (2015) that half of the librarians or library staff used social media to respond to client enquires and receive feedback. This implies that the librarians prefer the traditional library services to social media – based services. They are unwilling to embrace emerging technologies. A number of issues were identified by the respondent as constraints to the use of social media for service delivery by librarians. The respondents agreed that erratic power supply, lack of finance, poor Internet access and inadequate ICT facilities in the library were the major constraints that librarians faced in the use of social media for service delivery. Findings of a recent study on Internet accessibility and use of online law library information resources by library staff in customer service units.

Ezeani and Igwesi (2012) posited that most institutions have limited bandwidth and that poor connectivity could frustrate effective online participation. The finding also revealed that that there was a positive linear relationship between social media use and service delivery. Therefore, the null was accepted.

(Ajuwon, 2016) showed that erratic power supply is a major constraint that limits the usage of Internet health information resources. It is a major infrastructural problem in Nigeria and it affects

every facet of the country. The findings showed that the law library staff also agreed on epileptic power supply, as it is hard to deliver web- based services. It is worrisome that stable power supply in the Nigeria is still a mirage in this age. Almost all Internet applications including social media are run by electricity. Lack of finance is another major constraint.

Edewor et al (2016) in their study on marketing library and information services in selected university libraries in Africa observed that from the design to implementation requires adequate funding to succeed. According to them, a huge financial resource is required to design, implement and sustain the entire marketing process. The current findings also revealed same challenge faced in the study.

Summary

This paper presented the context of the study (Social Media Use and Application during COVID – 19 in Nigeria) through an introduction provided to a detailed background of the topic. The challenges faced by Law library staff of Ajayi Crowther University, Oyo on library services, how to market their products like dissemination of information and sharing of information resources such as photo, images, video, news that which are helpful and educative during COVID - 19 Pandemic and creating awareness of new arrivals, through social media applications. In the light of findings of the study, there is discovery of objectives for the study, research questions, formulating of hypothesis, Advantages of social media and the types of social media used during Pandemic, literature review, conclusion and recommendation.

Conclusion

The results of the study revealed that social media applications such as, Pinterest, Skype, Myspace, Flickr and Blogs were least used. Therefore, awareness needs to be created for the librarians to know more about these social media applications. These social media can be used for marketing and promoting library services. Most of university libraries should integrate more social media to provide effective services to their patrons. Social media applications such as instant messaging (IM) can be used to provide online reference services where reference librarians can communicate with library clientele. Rich Site Summary (RSS) can be used to notify users of acquisitions. YouTube can be used to provide services such as selective dissemination of information (SDI).

Recommendation

As a result of this recommendation, social media use can be of great use in special libraries as this would go a long way of helping library staff to develop social media web page for adequate marketing of the library products and information services to their users. Meanwhile, the existence of Social media in this 21st century has facilitated paradigm shift from traditional way of live in the world over. It has virtually made live easy for people in all ramifications such as communication, social interaction, marketing, learning etc. However, teenagers and other individuals who are susceptible to all forms of risks online should be better protected from all these forms of abuses.

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