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Library Users' Attitudes toward Social Media Applications for Dissemination of Information in Selected Nigerian University Libraries

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Abstract

Social media is one of the most engaging communication tools of modern era. The use of the social media has permeated all aspect of human endeavour be it commerce, education, social, health and entertainment. Library as a social institution has adopted the use of the media to engage the clients and share information. However, the preliminary investigation conducted by the researcher indicated that the use of the media in the libraries has been confronted with different reactions among the clients. This study therefore explored users' attitudes toward the use of social media applications for information dissemination in selected Nigerian university libraries (Kenneth Dike Library, University of Ibadan and Centre for Learning Resources, Covenant University). Descriptive statistics of frequency counts and percentages as well as inferential statistics of correlation method were used to analyse the study data. The results showed that the most prominent social media used for service delivery in the two university libraries are Facebook, WhatsApp, Flickr, Youtube and Instant Messaging.The findings indicated that significant number of respondents have positive disposition to the use of social media for information dissemination owing to the fact that the media offer immediate, relevant and better communication on library resources and services. The need to sustain the use of the social media for dissemination of information and possible filter of irrelevant contents from the media were recommended.

Keywords: Attitude, Social media, Applications, Information dissemination, University libraries

Introduction

Libraries are social institutions charged with the responsibilities of acquiring, organising, storing, preserving and making available for use information contained in human intellectual records. One of the typologies of libraries is academic library which is established with the primary functions of aiding and supporting teaching, learning and research through the provision of books, journals and other academic/information materials. The need to move with the times have also been considered in academic llibraries by incorporating the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) for information service delivery; fallout of which brought about the use of social media. Ezeani & Igwesi (2012) noted that beyond moving with times, the present economic scenario in Nigeria, where libraries are constantly experiencing dwindled budgets, left libraries with no option than to incorporate social media as a subtle means of

serving patrons in a more specialized, interactive and value added manner without incurring undue expenses.

Social media have been defined by different scholars and experts. For instance, Fang, Hu, Li, & Tsai (2014) defined social media as computer and mobile-mediated tools that facilitate interaction and sharing of information in text, visual, audio and video forms in an online networking environment. Kruger & Painter (2011) described social media as a virtual information sharing space which promotes face-to-face interaction and relationships between individuals. A common position in all the definitions is that social media are online tools whose principal aim is to offer social interactions and exchange of items, ideas, products and services among people of common interests (Kaplan & Haenlain, 2010; Chitumbo & Chewe 2015; Baruah, 2012). Social media operate in dialogic transmission where there may be many sources to many receivers of information, pictures, images and other resources.

Examples of social media applications in libraries include the Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, You tube, Blogs, Wikis, LinkedIn, WhatsApp, Flickr, Orkut among others. Social media as a medium of information sharing contributes through its immediacy to a healthy and direct relation between library personnel and their clients in an online environment. This immediacy encourages the library clients to be present and retain a stronger position towards information seeking. In addition to the use of social platforms for information seeking, library personnel are also increasingly reaching out to their clients via the social Web by communicating messages about existing print and online resources as well as to render reference services such as selective dissemination of Information, current awareness services, sharing of images/photographs, facilitation of literacy skills and library education.

Social media are different from traditional and industrial media in terms of quality, reach, frequency, usability, immediacy and permanence. However, as relevant as the social media appear to be in information service provision, it is noted that the clients maintain different attitudes (disposition) to the use of these applications for information service delivery, perhaps due to the fact that, the media are being regarded as tools of social interactions. Earlier studies such as Collins & Huan-Haase (2013); Jain (2013); Olasina (2011) have also reported dichotomy among the perceived benefits of social media adoption in libraries, attitudes and actual impression of patrons. They concluded that users hold divergent attitudes toward the use of social media for information service delivery.

Perloff (2016) noted that attitude is a psychological construct used to explain a mental and emotional entity that inheres in, or characterises a person. Attitude involves an individual's predisposed state of mind regarding a value and it is precipitated through a responsive expression towards a person, place, thing, or event which in turn influences the individual's thought and action. The term can be used to explain an individual library client's predisposition towards the use of social media for information seeking and provision in library system. An individual's predisposition towards certain thing, event or object may be negative or positive.

It therefore becomes imperative to investigate the attitudes of library users toward the use of social media for information dissemination in selected Nigerian university libraries. To this end, this study focused on Kenneth Dike Library, University of Ibadan and Center for Learning Resource, Covenant University to represent public and private university libraries respectively. The outcome of the study facilitated the comparison of users' attitudes to the use of social media in the two categories of universities.

Objectives of the study

The objectives of the study were to:

1. find out the types of social media used for service delivery in Kenneth Dike Library and Center For Learning Resource;
2. determine the frequency of use of social media for service delivery in selected university libraries; and
3. ascertain the attitudes of library clients towards the use of social media for service delivery in Kenneth Dike Library and Center For Learning Resource.

Research questions

The following research questions were raised in course of the study

1. What are the types of social media used for service delivery in Kenneth Dike Library and Center for Learning Resource?
2. What is the frequency of use of social media for service delivery in selected university libraries?

Hypothesis

H_1: There is no significant relationship between library users' attitudes and use of social media for service delivery in Kenneth Dike Library and Center For Learning Resource.

Literature Review

One of the most impressive aspects of the Internet in recent years is the evolution of social media and social networking sites. Junco, Heibergert & Loken (2010) noted that social media is a derivative of the social software movement which entails a collection of Internet websites,

services and practices that support collaboration, community building, participation and sharing. Social media are therefore redefining pattern of human interaction with fellow human and the relationship within the organisations. It is a kind of communication tools that promotes socialisation and online relationship through words, pictures and videos.

Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) stressed that social media could be classified into six different types namely; collaborative project, blogs and microblogs, content communities, social networking sites, virtual game worlds as well as virtual social worlds. The examples of each of the classes include the Wikipedia, Twitter, Youtube, Facebook, World of Warcraft and Second Life. These tools are being used for picture-sharing, vlogs, wall-postings, email, instant messaging, blogs, music-sharing, crowdsourcing and voice over Internet protocol (IP). Cohen (2011) averred that social media are important information sharing platform owing to the fact that the media enhance content in various formats, facilitate cross reference of different platforms, promote different levels of engagement by users, enhance multi-communication patterns, encourage real time communication, support the use of different devices (laptop, desktop, smartphone, i-pad), high speed and breadth of information dissemination and creation of real - time online events.

Libraries as social institutions have considered the relevance of social media in information service delivery and concluded that it remains one of the relationship marketing that creates conducive atmosphere for interaction between library users and librarians as well as for facilitation of means of paying dividends in the form of user loyalty (Fernandez, 2009). Social media also enhance two-way communication which afforded libraries to be in tandem with their users' changing needs and expectations. From the various studies conducted in both the developed and developing nations of the world, it is apparent that social media are being used as platform of information service delivery to the patrons in university libraries (Harinarayana & Kaju (2010); Borders, B. (2009); Linh (2008) among others).

In Nigeria, Anyaoku, Orakpor & Ezejiofor (2012) in a study of adoption of social media tools such as RSS feed, Facebook, Blog and Wiki concluded that social media are being used by library personnel for information provision. Similarly, Aharony (2009) examined the use of social media among personnel in the library. The researcher revealed that personnel made use of

social media such as blog to post information related to professional, personal and both issues on the same platform. Adeleke & Habila (2012) reported that both the library personnel and patrons are aware of the importance of social media for both personal and professional use. Baro, Idiodi & Godfrey (2013) in their study on awareness and use of web 2.0 in university libraries in Nigeria found that Web 2.0 tools such as Facebook are being used but the least used among the tools were Flickr, RSS feed, podcast and social bookmarking.

In a related development, Ofili & Emwanta (2014) asserted the use of Facebook as an information service delivery tool at the University of Benin Library, Nigeria and reported that the use of this tool was at the highest level in the library. Their findings revealed that social media were used to deliver services such as current awareness, selective dissemination of information, instruction in the use of the library and provision of factual answers to queries. In a separate remark, Quadri and Idowu (2016) on the use of social media in Nigerian university libraries maintained that adoption of the tools was for immediate feedbacks from the patrons on the library service. They concluded that social media could influence the library users to become library advocates and in turn promote library image within and outside the university community.

Attitudes of library clients towards the use of social media

Attitudes vary from one individual to another, some of which could be based on upbringing, experience, education, skill, and level of exposure, government policies, organisational policies, and others. Attitudes refer to feelings indicating favour or disfavour, and beliefs premise about something that are felt to be true. Fishbein (1967) defined attitude as "a learned predisposition of human beings". In this case, an individual is expected to respond to an object (or an idea) or a number of things (or opinions)". Similarly, library clients irrespective of the educational and other socio-demographic background, have their individual expectations and belief about the use of social media for information sharing. All these expectations and beliefs culminate into attitudes. Attitude could therefore mean individual way of thinking, acting and behaving. Attitude could be used to explain an individual's predisposed state of mind regarding a value and it is precipitated through a responsive expression toward a person, place, thing, or event which in turn influences the individual's thought and action.

An individual's predisposition towards certain thing, event, or object may be negative or positive. A strong connection between individual's perception and attitude towards a particular issue, event, or object has been established in the literature. Generally attitudes have three basic components, which are: affect, cognition and behaviour. The affect component refers to feelings about an object, cognition is related to beliefs about an object, and the behavioural component means the intention to take any action related to the object (Soloman, 2007). Research findings suggest that attitudes and beliefs about technology can be one of the major barriers to effective technology integration (Hew & Brush, 2007). According to Luthan (1998), the behavioural end of perception is that of reaction or response, whether overt or covert, which is necessary if perception is to be considered a behavioural event and thus a psychological process. As a result of perception, a client may move rapidly or slowly (overt) or develop an attitude (covert) towards an object. This implies that the perception of library clients may influence their attitude to the use of social media for information dissemination in libraries.

Methodology

Descriptive survey research design of the correlational type was adopted for this study. The population comprised 200 users of the libraries in the two categories of universities (private and public). Copies of questionnaire were administered on the users of the libraries and retrieved same on hand-to-hand basis. The data for the study were collected between November 2018 and February, 2019. The instrument for the study was based on users' attitudes to the use of social media for information dissemination. Data analysis involved the use of frequency counts, percentages and correlational method.

Results Presentation

Table 1: Socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents

Demographic profiles	Classification	Frequency	Percentages
Age range	20-30 31-40 41-50	94 60 41	48.2 30.7 21.0

Gender	Male	79	40.5
	Female	116	59.4
Level of study	Undergraduate	143	73.3
	Postgraduate	52	26.6

The analysis of the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents as presented in Table 1 indicated that large number of respondents are found in age bracket 20-30 (N=94) constituting 48.2%. The analysis also revealed that 116 representing 59.4% of the respondents are female while 79(40.5%) are male. The analysis further indicated that 143 (73.3%) of the respondents are undergraduates with only 52 (26.6%) being postgraduate students.The implications of the findings are that large number of respondents for the study are in age bracket 20-30, more female respondents and large number of undergraduates than postgraduate respondents in the two university libraries.

Objective 1: Types of social media used for service delivery in Nigerian university libraries

Table 2: Types of social media used for service delivery in KDL and CLR

Variables	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Facebook	89	45.6	23	11.7	44	22.5	39	20.0
WhatsApp	102	52.3	11	5.6	52	26.6	30	15.3
Twitter	23	11.7	47	24.1	92	47.1	33	16.9
Flicker	88	45.1	32	16.4	28	14.3	47	24.1
Blog	14	7.1	65	33.3	72	36.9	44	22.5
Wikis	66	33.8	52	26.6	43	22.0	34	17.4
YouTube	94	48.2	21	10.7	38	19.4	42	21.5
LinkedIn	18	9.2	43	22.0	87	44.6	47	24.1
RSS Feeds	33	16.9	56	28.7	71	36.4	35	17.9
Podcast	67	34.3	20	10.2	84	43.0	24	12.3
Instant Messaging	99	50.7	29	14.8	53	27.1	14	7.1

The analysis of the types of social media used for service delivery in Kenneth Dike Library and Center For Learning Resource is presented in Table 2. The results showed that Facebook, WhatsApp, Flickr, Youtube and Instant Messaging are the prominent and leading social media used for service delivery in the two university libraries. The analysis indicated that 112 (57.3%) of the respondents aligned that Facebook is being used for library services, while 113 (57.9%), 120 (61.5%), 115 (58.9%) and 128(65.5%) of the respondents agreed that WhatsApp, Flickr, Youtube and Instant messaging) are consistently used for information services in the two studied university libraries.

Objective 2: Frequency of use of social media for service delivery

Table 3 Frequency of use of social media for service delivery

Item	Frequency	Percentage
Daily	95	48.7
Weekly	43	22.0
Once a semester	25	12.8
Once a session	23	11.7
I have never accessed library social media	9	4.6
Total	**195**	**100.0**

The result of the frequency of use of social media (see Table 3) revealed that 95 constituting (48.7%) of the respondents opined that social media are being used for service delivery in the university libraries on daily basis, 43 (22.0%) of the respondents claimed that the media are used for information service on weekly basis. On the other hand, 9 (4.6%) of the respondents remarked that they have never accessed the library social media for information on library services. The implication of this findings is that the university libraries examined are visibly present on social media and these media are being used at regular interval for disseminating information to the teeming users of the libraries.

Objective 3: Attitudes and social media use for library service delivery

Table 4: Relationship between attitudes and social media use for library service delivery

			Positive	Negative	Social media use
Pearson's	Attitudes	Correlation Coefficient	.373**	.221**	.186*
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.018
		N	195	195	195
	Positive	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.435**	.998
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000
		N	195	195	195
	Negative	Correlation Coefficient	.435**	1.000	.899*
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.007
		N	195	195	195
	Social media use	Correlation Coefficient	.998	.899*	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.007	.
		N	195	195	195

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

The two indices of attitudes were found to have positive correlation with the use of social media among the library patrons (Positive r = 0.98, p<0.05 Negative disposition r = -0.89, p<0.05). This implies that attitudes have positive correlation as well as significant relationship with social media use. Therefore, it is concluded that a significant relationship exists between attitudes and use of social media by library users, hence the hypothesis is rejected.

Conclusion

The study demonstrated that social media are being used for information dissemination to the users in the two university libraries. This implies that the personnel of the university libraries have realised that social media constitute significantly in enhancing better communication and feedback. It is noted that significant number of respondents maintained positive disposition to the use of social media for information dissemination. Therefore, there is need to sustain the use of the social media for dissemination of information since large number of respondents submitted that the media offer immediate, relevance and better communication on library resources and services. However, challenges such as privacy concern problems, low level of technology

penetration and network problems are among the myriad of issues that must be looked at while tapping the embedded benefits of social media in the two Nigerian university libraries.

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