

Assessment of Digital Libraries' Visibility on Social Networking Sites in Academic Libraries in Kwara State.

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ABSTRACT

The research paper was on assessment of digital libraries' visibility on social networking sites in academic libraries in Kwara State. Libraries in higher institution have impact on academic development of both faculty members and students and there is urgent need to move their visibility from the physical library wall to the online society created as a result of digital information age. The major objectives of the paper was to find out the need for digitalization; level of digitalization and resources for the establishment of digital libraries in academic libraries; the desirability for social networks and the social networking sites that academic libraries are visible on. The research adopts a descriptive survey design. A simple random sampling technique was used to select 100 respondents as the sampled population and 52 were returned which accounted for 51% of the population. Questionnaire was used for data collection and analyzed using simple percentage, histogram, pie chart and mean. The finding revealed that the need for digitalization by libraries is buttressed by the need to access information and ensures durability of library resources; level of digitalization are majorly photocopying/reprography and the major resources required are uninterrupted power supply and ICT infrastructures. The findings also showed that most digitized information resources are books and journals. Findings further revealed that desirability for social media networking is rooted in the need for speed and quick information, advertising and marketing programmes of the library services and users' participation and libraries are mostly visible on are Facebook, Whatsapp and LinkedIn. Major challenges affecting academic libraries visibility on social networking sites according to the findings are insufficient fund; lack of technical knowledge and low bandwidth of internet; low interest of librarians in learning and utilizing social media and low patrons demand. Therefore, the study recommends that Government at all levels should provide strong financial support to academic libraries; each library's management should expose its staff to training and retraining on library digitalization and effective use of social networking sites in order to make apparent their visibility on social networking sites and speedy provision of online library services and instructions. Also, library management should consider using social networking as a tool for visibility to reach their multiple clientele.

KEYWORDS: Digital Libraries, Visibility, Social Networking Site, Academic Libraries

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I. INTRODUCTION

Academic libraries are particularly strategic in comparison to other libraries in that they offer research and knowledge exchange activities that underpin the very existence of their parent institutions. As such, academic libraries are crucial to the operation of tertiary institutions and their academic quests (Moran & Leonard, 2009). As social media increasingly becomes a strategic resource for university education, its adoption and use is no longer a choice for academic libraries. The development in web technology are creating more friendly, social and fun environments for retrieving and sharing information and one of such is social networking websites. The Oxford English Dictionary defines social networking as "the use or establishments of social networks or connections; (now *esp.*) the use of websites which enable users to interact with one another, find and contact people with common interests, etc" (Social Networking, 2010). The varied social networking tools are increasingly used by individuals of all ages but are especially popular among young people and college

students. These sites typically allow users to create a “profile” describing themselves, exchange public or private messages and list other users or groups they are connected to in the same way.

Online social networking by academic libraries is not, however, without controversy. While some maintain that social networking efforts are a successful and innovative method of students outreach, others argue that social networking by academic librarians is an ineffective use of librarians time and effort. (Sekyere, 2009). It is worthy of note however, that social networking sites have impacted nearly all library services including circulation user services, serials, collection development, library loan and document delivery, classification and cataloguing services, etc. According to Dickson and Holley (2010) a review of recent literature shows that social networking by academic librarians provides a potentially effective method of students outreach as long as librarians take into account the possible issues that may arise. Social Networking Sites (SNS) are helpful for stirring up interactions among users (Tella et al., 2013). Social networking sites provide an innovative and effective way of connecting users (O'Dell, 2010). Features of social networking sites enable users to generate interpersonal connections based on common grounds (Greenhow & Robelia, 2009)

Discussions by academic librarians highlights several uses of Facebook for academic library's visibility. One of the primary uses is to market the library with a library fan page. Here, the library advertise its hours, location and Web site information. By linking to the library's Website, the Facebook page acts as a portal to the library. Libraries also create event invitations for programs as an additional forum to promote library activities (Chu and Meulemans, 2008). Equally, academic libraries are experimenting with embedding library services within the Facebook page itself for adequate visibility. Using Facebook applications, some academic libraries embed the library catalogue to allow students to access the content of the library catalogue without visiting the library's Web site (Farkas, 2007b). Another option for libraries using LibGuides is to embed subject guides within the Facebook page through a LibGuide application (iLibrarian, 2007). User attitude towards library is changing day by day. User wants most practical and speed information in e-learning age. But providing quick and easy retrieval information to user is a great challenge to library. Therefore library should find and search some new techniques for impacting valuable information to the user. Social networking helps librarian to share information with patrons and students in the easiest way within the digital library environment. Facebook, Twitter, Drupal, MySpace, LibraryThing, LinkedIn, YouTube, Flickr, Wordpress, Bebo and so on are some of the tools extensively used by libraries. Having knowledge of how to use these tools to design and build library website and OPAC, provide reference services and alert services for interacting with users in a more effective and elegant way, and, this is the need of the hour for academic librarians.

Problem Statement/Justification

The idea of a digital library as a distributed electronic collection that covers virtually all fields of human endeavour including art, music, medicine, science, movies, books, videos, products, literatures, newspapers, catalogues etc offers its user community specialized functionality to have access to desired electronic information. The geometric increase in the quantity and quality of information, greater access, easy and quick retrieval of information are most crucial issues in the scenario of knowledge management. Today, not all academic libraries are fully digitized as some still operate both manual and computerized services as such they haven't gone completely digitized in the real sense thus creating limitation for their visibility on popular social networking sites. Also, the potentiality and credibility of librarians is a question mark in the age of information landscape where technology is changing drastically (Crawford, 2006). It is in light of this that this study therefore assess the need for digital libraries visibility on social networking sites among academic libraries in Kwara State.

Research Questions

- i. What is the level of digitalization in the selected academic libraries?
- ii. What are the resources required for the establishment of digital libraries in academic libraries?
- iii. What social networking sites are academic libraries visible on?
- iv. What are the challenges hampering digital libraries visibility on social networking sites?

II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The global trend is now characterised with a fundamental shift from traditional information environment to an e-environment where emphasis is placed on the acquisition of electronic resources such as e-books, e-journals and online databases. Bawack & Nkolo (2018) opined that academic libraries are changing dramatically by adopting new means of technology in all activities of print to e-environment while a variety of manual methods are gradually being replaced by computerised systems providing great opportunities for online accessibility. Academic libraries can become indispensable to their institutions by undergoing three vital paradigm shifts. The paradigm shifts in academic libraries operations according to (Jain, 2013) are: the shift from printed materials to multimedia in a variety of formats; a shift from information ownership to information

guidance; a shift from privilege institution to active competition. By undergoing these three shifts in library management, the academic library will assert itself rather than becoming merely peripheral part of its institutions' strategic vision. Academic libraries is referred to as the nerve centre of academic activities in any academic institution. They are expected to acquire, process, store and disseminate information resources both in print and non print forms for the benefit of the entire academic community. In this era of innovative technologies, academic libraries are struggling to retain their place as the major source of inquiry. Digitalisation therefore comes to play as it has not only revolutionized the way information is packaged and disseminated but also how users seek and access information. Campbell (2006) observed that numerous creative and useful services have evolved with academic libraries in the digital age: providing quality learning spaces, creating metadata, offering virtual reference services, teaching information literacy, choosing resources and managing resource licenses, collecting and digitizing archival materials, and maintaining digital repositories". Raju (2014) submitted that innovative methods of scholarly communication, the development of the library's virtual space, the proliferation and use of social media, and the explosive growth of mobile devices, like tablets and related applications, have collectively altered the traditional academic library beyond recognition.

Digital libraries emerged largely in the 1990s, because of internet revolution, advances in computer technologies particularly WAIS (Wide Area Information Server) and the World Wide Web technologies (Ballad 2000). WAIS is an information retrieval application that allows indexing of large quantities of information to be accessible through networks such as internet. It gives users the ability to retrieve information from multiple host, using one interface. The World Wide Web (WWW) is a powerful platform for providing access to multimedia information and has been used for the deployment of digital libraries. A digital library is perceived as information or a collection of electronic information resources, in which all the information resources are available in computer processible form. In addition, the functions of acquisition, processing, storage, preservation and retrieval are carried out using digital technologies such as computers, networks etc. A digital library depends on digital content and contains no conventional printed information resources, but electronic books, journals and newspapers. Access to the librarians may be through electronic means such as email. The digital library may not occupy a physical space, where users need to go gain access to its electronic resources. Digital libraries are increasingly being implemented by agencies both in government and the private sector. This development is attributed to, among other factors, the fact that digital libraries make research easier for scholars, and may also ease budgeting constraints associated with acquisition of print resources (Stephen and Mutula, 2008).

Digitization improves access to library resources, by digitizing library collections, information will be accessible to all instead of a group of researchers. Digital projects allow users to search for collections rapidly and comprehensively from anywhere at any time. Several users can access the same material the same time without hindrance. It also removes the problem of distance, as users do not have to travel to libraries that possess the hard copies of library materials before they can access and use such materials. Hirtle (2002) argued that the biggest benefit of digitization is the tremendous increase in the use of digitized material. He used the cases of the Cornell University and the University of Michigan as examples. In Cornell, prior to digitization, a few volumes of the hard copies circulated each year. However, with digitization, the views per month are above 4,000 web pages. Michigan has over 5,000 web page views per day. Michigan started earlier than Cornell.

The rise of online social networking tools is rooted in the emergence of Web 2.0. Web 2.0 can be "loosely defined as the evolution to a social and interactive Web that gives everyone a chance to participate" (Kroski, 2007b). Social networking tools are increasingly used by individuals of all ages but are especially popular among young people and college students. Due to high use among these two groups, many academic librarians advocate using these new social web platforms to reach out to student populations. Sumadevi (2019) asserted that "Social media provide a shift in how people discover, read and share news, information and content. Active communication between library and users creates added value in providing library services, while new possibilities and the value of using social networks directly contribute to a better visibility of the library in the digital environment. Indirectly it results in a better promotion of the library in its traditional environment, and increases both the number of users and their overall satisfaction with library services". She further explained that social media has some major features like social collaboration, easy surfing, more participation, private messaging can be easily possible by communicating thousand networks, discussion forums, events management, blogging and commenting, media uploading, multimedia enabled, interactive and collaborative learning are some of the important features that you can see in social networking.

Current researches have shown that digital libraries and social media is at beginning of understanding the benefits and problems behind incorporating these applications into digital library environment (Xie & Stevenson, 2013). A study conducted by McDonnell and Shiri (2011) found out that the integration of social media search applications in digital libraries made users more comfortable when using the digital library. Anari (2013) work showed that many libraries (national, public and academic) in the world are

making use of Social Media Technology (SMT) to provide services to visitors and to create an environment of mutual interaction in order to create a platform for sharing views, experiences, ideas and opinions with others.

Salamon-Cindori (2012) quoting from a work on library journal survey on public library marketing methods and best practices reported that 86% of libraries make use of SM and the top two SM platforms used by libraries are Facebook 99% and Twitter 56%. Many academic and public libraries in the United States have been embracing the use of Web 2.0 and Social Networking tools to enhance services to library patrons. Libraries have been progressively implementing a wide variety of these tools but many are concentrating efforts on the use of blogs, open source content management system such as Joomla and Drupal. Kai-Wah Chu and Du (2012) in their work found out that in North America and Europe, 71% were found to be using SM tools with a further 13% saying they planned to use them. Facebook and Twitter were the most commonly used tools. In Francis and Taylor (2014) an international research, the result of 497 responses showed that over 70% of librarians now feel that the use of SM is important, most libraries 68% were managing between one and four SM account. This is because SM has become a popular platform for young people to meet and libraries can also connect effectively with them on SM platforms. Ezeani and Igwesi (2012) stated that libraries in Nigeria have started to use these tools to be able to keep up with their patrons on real time. These media are used mostly to provide current and up to date information to clients, provide links to other open source library resources, and give information about new arrivals in the case of books through the link of the library world cat and through the updated list of journals.

In a research conducted by Olajide, Otunla and Omotayo (2017), they found out that the percentage of Nigerian libraries without a social media platform is high and this shows that Nigerian libraries are not current in providing information services to their clients through social medias. Majority of the responding institutions were academic libraries and research libraries which require prompt and quality services in diverse format because of the demand of their users and also because of the affiliations and group of users –millennial generations and high literate class of users. 44% is low compared to other advanced nations where libraries have taken their services to social media space. Social networking sites such as Myspace and Facebook and many others are also using instant messaging, chat services such as Meebo, to answer reference questions. Rogers (2009) quotes various libraries in the United States using YouTube, Facebook and Twitter are common social media tools used by librarians in the UK, while tags are commonly used by librarians in Asia (Gerolimos & Konsta 2011), RSS and bookmarks by librarians in Midwest America (Mahmood 2011; Kim & Abbas 2010), and Twitter, Facebook and YouTube by Canadian librarians (Collins & Quan-Haase 2012).

The use of social media tools in academic libraries is said to be gaining momentum in some African countries. Olasina (2011) notes that social media tools such as YouTube are powerful tools for leisure and, similarly, Si, Shi and Chen (2011) comment that tools such as Wikis and RSS feeds are mostly used for searching for information and following current events respectively. Trubitt and Overholtzer (2009) state that librarians have incorporated these applications into their daily routines, using Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, online gaming environments, and other tools to build and maintain complex webs of professional and personal relationships. Speaking on impact of social media in research visibility and publicity, Nwachi & Igboke (2019) submitted that continuing professional development is required to build up the technological competence of lecturers and to ensure that their seasoned research, present findings and collaborate with colleagues in other nations or continents are made accessible and visible in social media platforms for people to read and acknowledge them.

Barriers to effective use of social media in libraries are culture; organization support; conviction; user orientation; user participation; resources; patience; training; usability, software; privacy, IPR, copyright issues of social software; technical and institutional barriers. As social media policies provide guidance on how to manage time, mode of expression and content, the practice of writing policies in response to specific situations is a risk which might allow for a loophole through which some individuals could misuse applications (Oosman, McMillan & Bell 2014). Johnson and Burclaff (2013) comment that most social media policies are risk-averse since these technologies are subject to abuse and lack security and privacy.

III. METHODOLOGY

The descriptive survey research method was adopted for the study. A Simple random sampling technique is used to select 100 respondents as the sampled population and 52 were returned which accounted for 51% of the population. Questionnaire was used as the instrument for data collection and analyzed using simple percentage, histogram, pie chart and mean.

Analysis of Research Questions

Table 1: Level of Access to Social Media Networking Sites

Sections	Access to Social Media Account	Receives Information from section in charge	Do not receive information from the section in charge	No Access to social media account
Cataloguing and Classification	1	4	20	27
Acquisitions	21	23	7	1
Reference	19	28	4	1
Collection development	15	24	11	2
Circulation	18	21	9	4
Computer/Digit/E-library	11	24	14	3
Serials or Periodicals	14	24	10	4
Repository	7	19	15	11
Audiovisuals	10	15	25	2
Average Response of Level of Access	15.0	22.8	11.0	3.2

Table 1: shows the level of access to social media networking sites. The result revealed that majority of the users only “Receives Information from section in charge” with an average response of 22.78, The second highest level of access to social media networking sites is that users have “Access to Social Media Account” with a mean response of 15.0. An average response of 11 was recorded for “Do not receive information from the section in charge” while a mean response of 3.2 was ascertained for “No Access to social media account”. Therefore, the highest level of access to social media networking sites was for receiving information from section in charge.

Table 2: Level of Digitalization in the Library

Items	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	RII	Rank
Photocopying	27	22	2	1	0	0.888	1
Characterization	10	10	26	6	0	0.692	7
Online cataloguing	19	27	2	3	1	0.831	3
Web –Linking	11	18	8	15	0	0.696	6
Information retrieval	19	27	4	2	0	0.842	2
Online surfing	14	27	7	4	0	0.796	4
Digital signature	16	14	5	14	3	0.700	5
Book marking	7	20	15	9	1	0.688	8
Reformatting	8	17	17	8	2	0.681	9

Table 2 shows the comparison of relative importance index and ranking for level of digitalization in the library. The result of the RII shows that ‘Photocopying’ is the major level of digitalization in the library with RII of 0.88. The second major level of digitalization in the library is Information retrieval with RII of 0.84, and the third major level of digitalization in the library is Online cataloguing with RII of 0.83 while the least level of digitalization in the library is Reformatting with RII of 0.68.

Table 3: Resources for the establishment of digital libraries

Items	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	RII	Rank
Computers	33	13	3	1	2	0.885	2
Barcode readers	20	24	3	4	1	0.823	10
Photocopy machines	27	20	4	1	0	0.881	3
Uninterrupted power supply (U P S)	33	15	3	1	0	0.908	1
Scanners	25	18	8	1	0	0.858	6
Internet facilities	32	13	3	3	1	0.877	4
Webcam	21	22	6	3	0	0.835	9
Printers	23	19	9	1	0	0.846	7
Digital cameras	25	20	3	2	2	0.846	7
Stabilizers	22	18	7	2	3	0.808	11
Skilled manpower	27	20	3	1	1	0.873	5

Table 3 shows the comparison of relative importance index and ranking for resources for the establishment of digital libraries. The result of the RII shows that 'Uninterrupted power supply' is the major resources for the establishment of digital libraries with RII of 0.90. The second major resources for the establishment of digital libraries is 'Computers' with RII of 0.885, and the third major resources for the establishment of digital libraries is 'Photocopy machines' with RII of 0.881 while the least resources for the establishment of digital libraries is 'Stabilizers' RII of 0.80.

Table 4: Types of Social Media Sites that Libraries are visible on

Social media	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	RII	Rank
MySpace.com	5	8	27	9	3	0.612	15
Facebook	26	23	3	0	0	0.888	1
LinkedIn	16	25	3	4	4	0.773	3
Twitter	11	26	9	3	3	0.750	5
Badoo	4	16	15	14	3	0.615	13
Whatsapp	38	4	1	6	3	0.862	2
Hi5	4	11	16	20	1	0.588	18
Teacher Tube	10	5	17	19	1	0.615	13
Netlog	3	10	17	21	1	0.573	19
Instagram	11	27	1	8	5	0.719	8
Skype	12	24	6	7	3	0.735	6
Snapchat	9	24	5	11	3	0.696	9
Blog	10	21	9	8	4	0.696	9
Wikis	12	11	13	11	5	0.654	12
YouTube	19	16	1	10	6	0.723	7
Flickr	6	13	16	11	6	0.608	16
Ning	6	12	16	11	7	0.596	17
Meebo	2	15	8	18	9	0.535	20
Slide share	12	13	13	11	3	0.677	11
Library Thing	28	5	3	12	4	0.758	4

Table 4 shows the comparison of relative importance index and ranking for types of social media sites that libraries are visible on. The result of the RII shows that 'Facebook' is the major type of social media sites that libraries are visible on with RII of 0.88. The second major type of social media sites that libraries are visible on is Whatsapp with RII of 0.86, and the third major type of social media sites that libraries are visible on is LinkedIn with RII of 0.77 while the least type of social media sites that libraries are visible on is Netlog with RII of 0.57.

Table 5: Challenges Affecting Academic Libraries Visibility on Social Networking Sites

Challenges	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	RII	Rank
Insufficient fund	36	7	2	5	2	0.869	1
Lack of technical knowledge	25	21	3	3	0	0.862	2
Shortage of skilled man power	14	31	5	2	0	0.819	6
Low bandwidth of internet and ICT infrastructure in library	21	25	2	4	0	0.842	3
Lack of training opportunities for library staff	12	29	7	3	1	0.785	8
Low interest of librarians in learning and utilizing social media	19	27	4	2	0	0.842	3
Confidentiality of information	13	25	7	6	1	0.765	10
Lack of privacy and identity theft	23	18	6	4	1	0.823	5
Institutional barrier	14	24	10	4	0	0.785	8
Copyright issues	19	20	8	5	0	0.804	7
Low patrons demand	13	25	8	2	4	0.758	11

Table 5 shows the result of relative importance index and ranking for challenges affecting academic libraries visibility on social networking sites. The result of the RII shows that 'Insufficient fund' is the major challenge affecting academic libraries visibility on social networking sites with RII of 0.869. The second major challenge affecting academic libraries visibility on social networking sites is 'Lack of technical knowledge' with RII of 0.862, and the third major challenge affecting academic libraries visibility on social networking sites is 'Low bandwidth of internet' and 'ICT infrastructure in library' and 'Low interest of librarians' in learning and utilizing social media with RII of 0.84 while the least challenge affecting academic libraries visibility on social networking sites is 'Low patrons demand' with RII of 0.75.

IV. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The global trend is now characterized with a fundamental shift from traditional information environment to an e-environment where emphasis is placed on the acquisition of electronic resources such as e-books, e-journals and online databases. The result of the study revealed that level of access to social media networking sites revealed that majority of the users only "Receives Information from section in charge" with an average response of 22.78, The second highest level of access to social media networking sites is that users have "Access to Social Media Account" with a mean response of 15.0. An average response of 11 was recorded for "Do not receive information from the section in charge" while a mean response of 3.2 was ascertained for "No Access to social media account". Therefore, the highest level of access to social media networking sites was for receiving information from section in charge. On the need for digitalization of library resources, the result of the RII shows that 'Facilitate access to information' and 'durability' are the major needs for digitalization of library resources with RII of 0.85.

On the level of digitalization in the library, the result of the RII shows that 'Photocopying' is the major level of digitalization in the library with RII of 0.88. The second major level of digitalization in the library is Information retrieval with RII of 0.84, and the third major level of digitalization in the library is Online cataloguing with RII of 0.83 while the least level of digitalization in the library is Reformatting with RII of

0.68. Relative importance index and ranking of digitized information resources shows that 'Books' is the major digitized information resources with RII of 0.87. The result for the resources for the establishment of digital libraries shows that 'Uninterrupted power supply' is the major resources for the establishment of digital libraries with RII of 0.90. The second major resources for the establishment of digital libraries is 'Computers' with RII of 0.885, and the third major resources for the establishment of digital libraries is 'Photocopy machines' with RII of 0.881 while the least resources for the establishment of digital libraries is 'Stabilizers' RII of 0.80. The result of reasons for libraries' desirability for social media networks shows that 'Speed and quick information' is the major reason for libraries' desirability for social media networks' with RII of 0.94.

The result of the types of social media sites that libraries are visible on shows that 'Facebook' is the major type of social media sites that libraries are visible on with RII of 0.88. The second major type of social media sites that libraries are visible on is Whatsapp with RII of 0.86, and the third major type of social media sites that libraries are visible on is LinkedIn with RII of 0.77 while the least type of social media sites that libraries are visible on is Netlog with RII of 0.57. This result buttressed the study of Salamon-Cindori (2012) quoting from a work on library journal survey on public library marketing methods and best practices reported that 86% of libraries make use of SM and the top two SM platforms used by libraries are Facebook 99% and Twitter 56%. On challenges affecting academic libraries visibility on social networking sites revealed that 'Insufficient fund' is the major challenge affecting academic libraries visibility on social networking sites with RII of 0.869. The second major challenge affecting academic libraries visibility on social networking sites is 'Lack of technical knowledge' with RII of 0.862, and the third major challenge affecting academic libraries visibility on social networking sites is 'Low bandwidth of internet' and 'ICT infrastructure in library' and 'Low interest of librarians' in learning and utilizing social media with RII

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