



Social Media Literacy of Librarians of Government-Owned Universities in Kano State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

Social media technologies have, in recent years, become very popular and pervade all sectors of human endeavor including educational agencies. They provide ample opportunities for libraries to promote and deliver services in very efficient way. Today, it is very common to find one type of social media (SM) or the other in Nigerian university libraries. However, to effectively utilize of these tools, librarians have to be SM literate. Previous studies have reported lack of SM skills among librarians, but they fail to specify which of the skills are lacking. In an attempt to fill the gap, this study examined the extent of SM literacy of librarians in government owned universities in Kano State, Nigeria. The study was based on Vanwynsberghe, Boudry and Verdegem SM literacy model. Using total enumeration sampling, the entire four governments owned university libraries in Kano State were used for the study. Questionnaire was the instrument used for data collection from all the academic librarians of these university libraries. The instrument was validated by experts, and was found to be reliable at Cronbach Alpha value of between 0.75 and 0.90 after running a reliability test. SPSS 21 version software was used for data analysis. The findings of the study show that academic librarians have low knowledge of most SM features, library service provision using SM. They have positive attitude SM use SM multiple times in a day. The study concludes that despite the librarians' low SM skills, it will continue to thrive in university libraries due to the librarians' positive attitude and very frequent use of the tool. The research finally recommends that librarians should strive to acquire knowledge and skills of using various SM features.

Keywords: Social media tools, Information literacy, Attitude, Social media

Introduction

Social media tools (SM) tools are described as computer-based technologies that facilitate the sharing of ideas, thoughts, and information through the building of virtual networks and communities (Saileela & Kalaivani, 2019). SM includes a variety of applications, including collaborative projects, content communities, and micro-blogs/blogs. Twitter; social networking sites and virtual worlds (Chewe, Zulu, Chitumbo, & Musonda, 2020). These technologies have, in recent years, become very popular and pervaded all sectors of human endeavour. Studies have revealed that adoption and use of SM tools have climaxed in libraries of the developed countries, providing opportunities for them to promote and deliver services to their users in an effective way (Amuda & Adeyinka, 2017; Humphreys, 2019). The authors added that appreciable number of academic libraries in the developing countries has also embraced them even though they are yet to maximally harness their potentials. Although the potential of using SM has been realised by libraries and librarians, Kaur, Shri and Mital (2015), Edewor, Okite-Amughoro, Osuchukwu, and Egreajena (2016) argued that majority of them use SM in an informal way to maintain friendships and underutilize SM tools in the provision of library services. These constitute a problem, causing the achievement of the desired goal of SM adoption to fail (Anwar & Zhiwei, 2019).



The authors added that librarians need new skills that will enable them to fully utilize SM tools in the provision of library and information services. These set skills would enable librarians operate within SM environment, interact with patrons within the sites, understand and articulate the nature of social networking sites and their potential roles related to library services, creating presences and content, evaluating and applying information, and having the ability to assist patrons with gaining and applying these skills. SM come with a lot of powers, enabling the creation of contents and sharing of materials with other people. The tools change the way people get and share information. With this change and power people have over information creation and sharing, they have the responsibility of using it correctly (Bradley, 2015). Many studies had reported lack of SM skills among librarians (Muhammad & Zhiwei, 2019; Tofi, 2019). While there are many set of skills that are required to operate SM effectively, the studies failed to specify the areas librarians are deficient. This study based on Vanwysberghe, Boudry, and Verdegem (2012) SM Literacy Framework attempts to investigate the extent of SM literacy of academic librarians in the Kano State government-owned universities. This will enable policy makers understand the specific areas librarians lack the skills with a view to training them in those areas.

Objectives of the Study

The specific objectives of the study are to:

- i. determine the extent of knowledge of social media by academic librarians in government-owned university libraries in Kano State;
- ii. determine the extent which academic librarians in government-owned university libraries in Kano State can use social media in the provision of library services; and
- iii. examine academic librarians' attitude toward the use of social media for the provision of library services.

Review of Related Literature

Social media has been defined in different ways by scholars. Chitumbo (2015) considers them as online tools whose principle aim is to offer social interactions and exchange of items/products between and or among people with common interests. Muhammad and Zhiwei, (2019) considers SM as "A collection of Internet-based communities that allow users to interact with each other online" (p. 25). SM includes web forums, wikis, and user-generated content (UGC) websites. A scan of the existing definitions of SM has revealed that three common features suffice in most of them. They are computer/web-based technologies, tools for communication, sharing of ideas, thoughts, and information and lastly, enable formation or building of communities. Amuda and Adeyinka (2017) have identified various types of SM, which include *Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, WeChat, Instagram, QQ, QZone, Weibo, Twitter, Tumblr, Telegram, Baidu Tieba, LinkedIn, LINE, Snapchat, Pinterest, and Viber*.

Social media is a tool in the provision of library services. It helps building good relationships among library staff and library users. Citing example of the advantages of SM to libraries, Amuda and Adeyinka (2017) mentioned that "*Facebook* helps the library professionals to create an account to promote their library resources and services. *Facebook* provides platforms to market their source s and service effectively and efficiently" (p. 24). SM tools facilitate communication, presentation, promotion and marketing. SM is very important tool in the promotion of library services and resources. The tools enable libraries to engage with their current and prospective patrons. The tools are equally important in persuading and maintaining relationships with users particularly the younger generations who are already engrossed into the social networking age (Chitumbo, 2015).

Taylor and Francis Group (2014), opined that usage of SM by libraries has so many advantages among which are, freedom to interact with users and the ability to connect with different



departments within their institutions. They are not costly and very easy to use without requiring the involvement of external departments or advisors. SM effectively enable libraries to connect with users in a space that they already occupy, while bringing added value to existing activities (Igwe, & Ononye, 2020; Jones & Harvey, 2019))

As the popularity of SM tools are growing exponentially, library professionals cannot exempt themselves from using them (Chakrabarti, 2016). Scholars have reported how libraries are now making use of SM, Some use them in supporting research, teaching and learning in their respective institutions, while others use them in their house-keeping operations, (Igwe, & Ononye, 2020; Arumugam & Balasubramani, 2019) Chakrabarti (2016) pointed out that academic libraries in India and abroad make use of SM in marketing their services, they use *Wikis* and *Flickr* in posting library material and library news as well as disseminate information on library related issues to their users. The ultimate ideology of using SM tools, concludes Omini (2019), is to promote library services and resources and to improve the prominence of the library.

SM literacy is defined as, “the competences of individuals to (appropriately) use social media applications and to critical analyze, evaluate, share and create social media content” ([Vanwysberghe, Boudry, & Verdegem, 2012](#), p. 9). The term is used interchangeably with competency, knowledge and skill. For example, The Meriam Webster Dictionary defined competence as, the quality or state of having sufficient knowledge, judgment, skill, or strength (as for a particular duty or in a particular respect), while Woodhouse (2014, 188) sees competence as, “the ability to do something, whether it is a simple task or complex analysis, with accuracy, efficiency, and reliability.” In another definition Mulder, Gulikers Biemans and Wesselink (2009, p. 757) defined competence as “series of integrated capabilities consisting of clusters of knowledge, skills and attitudes necessarily conditional for task performance and problem solving and for being able to function effectively in a certain profession, organisation, job, role and situation”

These definitions have indicated the critical importance of competence in the execution of a given job. In the context of using SM for library services, librarians require specific competencies in order to deliver professional services through using these tools. Librarians should have SM competence in order to effectively use the tools in the provision of library services. Murphy and Moulaison (2009, p. 328) mentioned that SM competencies comprise of “suggested set of skills that librarians should possess as social networking literate information professionals capable of implementing library services and utilizing information within social networking sites.” This statement implies that librarians should be literate in information articulation, creation, use and sharing via SM. They should be capable of evaluating information, interacting with the library users and responding to their needs adequately. Librarians possessing these skills are capable of efficiently and effectively navigating online social networking sites and applying their expertise to services with and within this now central realm for interacting with information.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study is based on Vanwysberghe, Boudry and Verdegem conceptual framework on SM literacy. The model portrays that SM literacy comprises of SM competencies and skills. There are three requisites for someone to become SM literate. First, one has to have access to the basic technology such as computers, smartphones, Internet and have the skills of using them. Secondly, the knowledge and competencies to use and manipulate SM tools. This include ability to access and respond to postings on SM, write and share text, upload photos and so on. The third are attitude and efficacy. Positive attitude toward SM tool will make someone to use it.

The Figure 1 below depicts the various components that are required to become SM literate

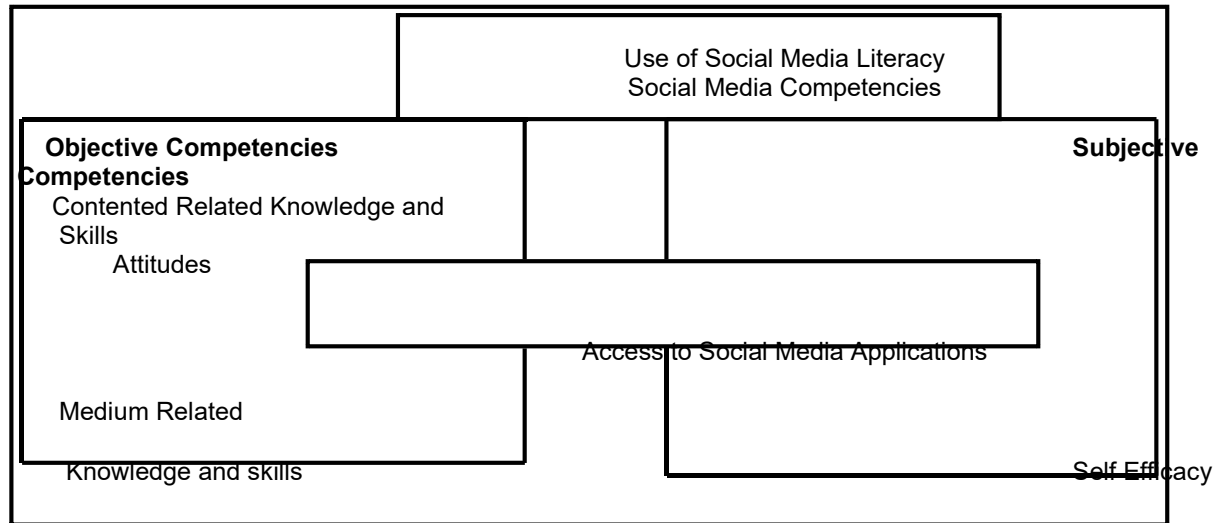


Figure 1: Conceptual model of social media competency

Methodology

The study adopted the survey research design. The population of the study comprised of 69 academic librarians in the 4 government owned universities in Kano State. The sample size of the study was the entire 69 academic librarians of the 4 university libraries, using total enumeration sampling technique. Questionnaire was the instrument for data collection. The questionnaire consisted of the following elements:

- i. Librarians’ demographic data comprising of gender, age, and educational qualification.
- ii. Librarians’ extent of knowledge of SM.
- lii. Librarians’ extent of use of SM in the provision of library services
- iv. Librarians’ attitude toward the use of SM for the provision of library services.

The instrument was administered to the entire 69 librarians. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) 21 version software was used for data analysis, using descriptive statistics. Percentages and frequencies were generated in presenting the findings. All responses were carefully extracted according to the structure of the data collection instrument.

Response Rate

There are four government owned universities in Kano State, namely; Bayero University (BUK), Yusuf Maitama Sule University (YMSU), Kano University of Science and Technology (KUST) and Police Academy College (POLAC). A total of 69 copies of the questionnaire was administered to the academic librarians working in the universities and 59 (85.5%) copies of the returned questionnaire were found usable and used for the analysis. Table 1 gives a summary of the distribution of the questionnaire and responses received from each of the university libraries sampled for the study.



Table 1: Responses to questionnaires distributed to the sampled university libraries

University Library	Copies of Questionnaire Administered	Copies of Questionnaires Returned	Usable	Percent % (Usable Questionnaire)
BUK	36	31		86
KUST	13	11		85
YMSU	12	11		92
POLAC	8	6		75
Total	69	59		85.5

The response rate from all the universities is very good. Yusuf Maitama Sule University (YMSU) has the highest response with 11 (92%) respondents out of 12 academic librarians. This was followed by Bayero University Kano (BUK) with 31 (86%) respondents, Police Academy College has the least response with 6 (75%) respondents. In total, there were 59 (85.5%) respondents whose questionnaires were well filled, returned and found usable for the study. This number 59 was used for the analysis.

Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

The demographic data collected from the respondents include sex, age and highest educational qualification. This data enabled the researcher to assess the demographic characteristics of the respondents which may likely affect the academic librarians' SM literacy. Table 2 below shows the summary of the librarians' demographic data.

Table 2: Demographic characteristics of the respondents

Demographic Variables	Characteristics	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	32	54.2
	Female	27	45.8
	Total	59	100.0
Age	25-35	21	35.6
	36-45	22	37.3
	46-55	16	27.1
	Total	59	100.0
Educational Qualification	First Degree	9	15.3
	Master Degree	41	69.5
	Ph.D.	9	15.3
	Total	59	100.0



Table 2 shows that out of the 59 respondents, 32 (54%) respondents were male while 27 (46%) were female. This indicates that more than half of the respondents were male, which shows that majority of the academic librarians in the university under study were males. On their age, Table 2 shows that the largest number 22 (37%) was in the age group 36 – 45 years, less than half of the total respondents, followed by age group 25 – 35 years with 21 (36%) respondents. The least number of the respondents was in the age group 46 - 55 years with only 16 (27%) respondents. The respondents' qualifications from the table show that the highest number 41 (69.5%) of the respondents were those with Master degree, constitute more than half of the total respondents. Both First Degree and Ph.D. have equal number of respondents with 9 (15%) respondents each.

Knowledge of Social Media Concepts

Respondents were asked to indicate their perceived level of knowledge of SM concepts; as an important component of SM literacy. The librarians' responses are shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Knowledge of Social Media Concepts

Knowledge of SM Concepts	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor	Very Poor	Percentage
Wall	38 (63%)	13 (22%)	5(8%)	1 (2%)	2 (3%)	59 (100%)
Sharing	30 (50%)	16 (27%)	10 (17%)	2 (3%)	1 (2%)	59 (100%)
Status	28 (47%)	22 (36.7%)	3 (5%)	3 (5%)	3 (5%)	59 (100%)
Torent	4 (6.7%)	5 (8.3%)	5 (8.3%)	35 (59%)	10 (17%)	59 (100%)
Profile	35 (58%)	17 (28.3%)	4 (6.7%)	1 (1.7%)	2 (3.3%)	59 (100%)
Cookie	6 (10.0%)	7 (11.7%)	36 (60%)	6 (10%)	4 (6.7%)	59 (100%)
Like	46 (77%)	9 (15%)	2 (3.3%)	1 (1.7%)	1 (1.7%)	59 (100%)
Phishing	0 (0%)	5 (8.3%)	17 (28.3)	26 (43%)	11 (18%)	59 (100%)
Bookmarking	34 (57%)	10 (16.7%)	9 (15%)	4 (6.7%)	2 (3.3%)	59 (100%)
Rating	8 (13.3%)	16 (26.7%)	30 (50%)	5 (8.3%)	0 (0%)	59 (100%)
Commenting	36 (60%)	15 (25%)	6 (10%)	1 (1.7%)	1 (1.7%)	59 (100%)
Malware	6 (10%)	9 (15%)	28 (46.7%)	14 (23%)	2 (3%)	59 (100%)
Widget	3 (5%)	5 (8.3%)	16 (26.7%)	13 (22%)	22 (37%)	59 (100%)

Majority of the respondents have very good knowledge of concept of Like with 46 (76.7%) respondents. More than half of the respondents have very good knowledge of Wall 38 (63.3%), Profile 35 (58.3%), Bookmarking 34 (56.7%) and Commenting 36 (60%) respondents. Less than half of the respondents have very good knowledge of Status 28 (46.7%). Table 3 has further indicated that very few respondents have very good knowledge of Torent 4 (6.7%), Cookie 6 (10%), Rating 8 (13.3%), Phishing 0 (0%), Malware 6 (10%) and Widget 3 (5%) respondents. Phishing is the least without any respondent having very good knowledge of it.



Services Provision through Social Media

Academic librarians were asked to indicate their level of competence in the provision of certain services via SM. These services are very essential in determining the extent of librarians' SM literacy. Table 4 has shown the extent which the respondents can provide such SM services.

Table 4: Services Provision through Social Media

Services Provision Via SM	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor	Very Poor	Total
Uploading Pictures	19 (31.7%)	20 (33.3%)	12 (20%)	6 (10%)	2 (3.4%)	59 (100%)
Statistics Consultation	11 (18.3%)	14 (23.3%)	13 (21.7%)	12 (20%)	9 (15.3%)	59 (100%)
Like Posting	32 (53.3%)	21 (35%)	3 (5%)	2 (3.3%)	1 (1.7%)	59 (100%)
Posting Review	30 (50%)	14 (23.3%)	10 (16.7%)	3 (5%)	2 (3.3%)	59 (100%)
Tag Photo	27 (45%)	21 (35%)	6 (10%)	3 (5%)	2 (3.4%)	59 (100%)
Search Information	16 (26.7%)	22 (36.7%)	13 (21.7%)	4 (6.7%)	4 (6.7%)	59 (100%)
Generating Questions	11 (18.3%)	4 (6.7%)	13 (21.7%)	20 (33.3%)	11 (18.3%)	59 (100%)
Creating Hyperlink	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	19 (31.7%)	29 (48.3%)	19 (31.7%)	59 (100%)
Elicit Response	20 (33.3%)	19 (31.7%)	7 (11.7%)	10 (16.7%)	3 (5%)	59 (100%)
Responding to Queries	21 (35%)	33 (55%)		3 (5%)	2 (3.3%)	59 (100%)
Posting Advert	4 (6.7%)	8 (13.3%)	23 (38.3%)	11 (18.7%)	13 (21.7%)	59 (100%)

Pertaining services provision using SM, Like Post has the highest respondents who are very good in performing that services with more than half of the respondents 32 (53%) followed by Posting, half of the respondents are very good in Posting 30 (50%). Less than half of the respondents are very good in performing the following services Uploading Pictures 19 (31.7%), Statistics 11 (18.3%), Tag Photo 27 (45%), Search Information 16 (26.7%), Generating Question 11 (18.3%), and Hyperlink 0 (0%), Elicit Response 20 (33.3%), responding to Queries 21 (35%), Posting Advert 4 (6.7%) respondents. Creating Hyperlink has 0 (0%) respondents and this indicates that it is the least services which respondents are very good in performing, followed by Posting Advert with 4 (6.7%) respondents who indicated that they are very good providing such services using SM.

Academic Librarians' Attitudes toward Use of SM for Library Services

Attitude makes an individual to decide whether to use SM tool or not. This depends on whether one has positive or negative attitude toward SM tool. Respondents were therefore asked to indicate the extent which they agree with a statement which shows whether they had positive or negative attitude toward SM. Librarians responses are indicated in Table 5.

Table 5: Responses of academic librarians’ attitudes toward SNSs

Attitude	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Percent
SM is Good	33 (55%)	18 (30%)	3 (5%)	3 (5%)	2 (3.3%)	59 (100%)
SM is Pleasant	45 (75%)	6 (10%)	5 (8.3%)	3 (5%)		59 (100%)
SM is Interesting	43 (70.7%)	8 (13.3%)	2 (3.3%)	4 (6.7%)	2 (3.3%)	59 (100%)
SM is Useful	34 (56.7%)	23 (38.3%)	1 (1.7%)	1 (1.7%)		59 (100%)

Table 5 shows the attitude of academic librarians toward use of SM for the provision of library services. Respondents have positive attitude toward use of SM for the provision of library services. Majority of the respondents have strongly agreed with the two statements, SM is pleasant with 45 (75%) and SM is interesting with 43 (70.7%) respondents respectively. The Table also shows that more than half of the respondents have agreed that SM is useful with 34 (56.7%) respondents and SM is good with 33 (55%) respondents and this was the least.

Frequency of Use of Social Media

The more the respondents use SM the better he becomes in using it. The Vanwysberghe, Boudry and Verdegem (2009) inserted use as a factor in determining SM literacy. The librarians’ responses are shown in Table 6 below:

Table 6: Frequency of Use of Social Media

Frequency of Use	Number	Percent
Once a Month	1	1.7
Once a Week	2	3.3
Once a Day	20	33.9
Several Times a Day	36	61.0
5	1	1.7
Total	59	100

Table 6 shows frequency of use of SM by academic librarians. The Table shows that use of SM several times has the highest with 36 (61%) respondents, it was followed by use of SM once a day with 20 (33.9%) respondents. There are only 2 (3.3%) persons, who indicate use of SM once a week and the least was only 1 (1.7%) respondent, who indicated that he used SM once a month.

Discussion of the Findings

The findings of the study have shown that there are more male librarians than female and most of the librarians in the universities under study have higher degrees. Knowledge of SM concepts is very important component of SM literacy. The result of the study has indicated

that academic librarians have very good knowledge of some basic concepts of SM such as *Like, Wall, Profile, Bookmarking* and *Commenting*. Academic librarians’ knowledge was found to be very low with regard to other concepts which are very important when it comes to SM service provision. Knowledge



of *Status, Torent, Cookie, Rating, Phishing, Malware* and *Widget* are either low or very low. The discovery from this study is in line with the findings of the studies by Okeji, Nwankwo, Chukwuemeka and Anene (2020), Oyeniran and Olajide (2019), whose findings also showed that there was lack of knowledge of SM tools among academic librarians in Nigeria. However, the study of academic librarians in India, Kaur and Manhas (2018) reported very high knowledge of SM tools which was contrary to the findings of this study. As for the extent to which respondents can provide services via SM tools, the findings of the study showed that the librarians lack skills in performing such services. The respondents have very good skills in only two of the outlined services. The findings of this study corroborate the findings of Osinulu, et al (2018) and that of Uche and Udo-Anyanwu who also reported lack of knowledge of SM tools by university library staff in Nigeria.

Contrary to these findings was the study on SM knowledge by university staff in South Africa and Zimbabwe by Mabweazara and Zinn (2016). The study showed that university staff in South Africa has very high skills in providing library services via SM tools. This negative development will affect efficient use of SM for library services in Nigeria and need to be addressed. The attitude of academic librarians toward use of SM tools for library services was very good. They generally have positive attitude toward use of SM for library services. This finding is in line with the result of the study conducted by Idiedo (2020) on academic librarians in South South Nigeria. The positive attitude exhibited by the librarians is a clear testimony that will continue using SM for library services. The frequency of using SM by academic librarians under study was very high, majority of the respondents indicated that they use SM many times in a day. These findings are in line with those of Adewojo and Mayowa-Adebara (2016), who also reported multiple use of SM in a day by librarians. This development is an indication that librarian's efficacy in using SM will improve over time as argued by Vanwynsberghe, Boudry and Verdegem (2012), the more SM is used the better user becomes.

Conclusion

Social media tools have the potentials of facilitating the provision of effective library services. This factor and their affordability have made SM penetrated into Nigerian academic libraries. However, the effective utilization of SM tools depends largely on the ability of the librarians to manipulate the tools very well. It is very essential for librarians to have the skills, competencies and literacy of using SM tools in order to tap their potentials. Although librarians have low SM knowledge their positive attitude toward use of SM for library services and their use of SM very regularly are factors that will help in promoting their literacy. Academic librarians will continue using SM tools for library services.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study the following recommendations are offered:

1. Library professionals should do their best to understand the basic concepts of SM and their use.
2. Library professionals should do their best to learn basic and advanced skills of using and manipulating SM for library services.
3. Library professionals should continue practicing SM to perfect their knowledge.



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