CHAPTER TWO

THE PLACE OF SOCIAL MEDIA AS A VIABLE TOOL FOR RESOURCE SHARING IN LIBRARIES

Abstract
This paper look at how libraries can shared resources among themselves through various social media that allows them to create, collaborate, connect, store, retrieve and share contents in a way that will enhance maximum attainment of library service goals. It also highlights various forms of resource sharing and types of social media that can be applied to resource sharing; it emphasizes the importance and challenges of social media as a veritable tool for resource sharing in library. It concludes that social media is a veritable tool that supports library in the aspect of resource sharing, most importantly, as most libraries are facing financial problems, which are causing drastic decline in purchasing power of libraries. Finally, some recommendations were suggested on how to improve resource sharing through collaboration.
Keywords: Resource sharing, social media, library.

Introduction

Library is a social institution that houses various information resources in differing formats, which are meant to serve the reading, research, referencing or consultation purpose of the clients. According to Wikipedia in Sulyman (2018), it is a collection of sources of information and similar resources, made accessible to a defined community for reference or borrowing. Because no library can be self sufficient, This makes it imperative for libraries to collaborate among themselves to share their resources, as this will help improve on service provision and delivery. Resource sharing are the activities that result from an agreement, formal or informal, among a group of libraries (usually a consortium or network) to share collections, data, facilities, personnel, etc., for the benefits of their users and to reduce the expense of collection development (Reitz, 2004). Resource sharing denotes a mode of operation whereby the functions are shared in common by a number of libraries. Any functions, activities, expertise or practice that is exchanged among libraries, based on agreement or contract to meet their mandates can be considered as resource sharing. Krishnappa (2013) opines that resource sharing is nothing but sharing of library resources by participating libraries among themselves on the basis of principle of co-operation. He continued that in such co-operative venture, it becomes possible for a user in any of the participating libraries to make use of the resources of not only his library, but also the resources of others. Thus, through resource sharing consortium, libraries can improve the total collection of reading material, consolidate their technological capabilities, improve their dissemination tools and extend their information services to a larger user community. Resource sharing means that you are collaborating with one or more libraries to maximize access to a larger array of resources by sharing the collections of the cooperating libraries or pooling funding to purchase shared digital resources (Eduscape.com, 2018).

Scholars have taken the concept of resource sharing beyond inter library loan. Muthu (2013) opines that besides entering into inter-library practice, libraries also thought of resource sharing in many other areas, such as co-operative acquisition, co-operative cataloguing, co-operative classification, library consortium, library co-operation, selective dissemination of information, document delivery services, union catalogue/list, etc. Resource sharing is one of the library promotional activities, which enable libraries to connect and share resources beyond their four walls. Mustafa, Zainuddin, Idris and Abd Aziz (2016) avers that library promotional activities should go beyond their normal boundary. Library services and activities should be reachable after the normal opening hours. One of the ways to achieve that is by applying social media to resource sharing activities in the library.

In the knowledge based society, knowledge is a critical organization resource that provides sustainable competitive advantage and knowledge about activities, services customers/users is an increasingly valuable resources that need to be shared broadly throughout an organization. Davenport & Prusak, 1998, Grant 1996 in (Anwarul Islam & Keita Tsuji 2016). Akporhonor and Olise (2015) remarks that social media is a potent means in which librarians and libraries can optimize for their works and services as well as maintain their relevance through a medium like social media. They concludes that in this 21st century, where a paradigm shift in communicating library services to users is evident, a modern and contemporary tool would be needed to promote library and information resources services. Suraweera (2011) posits that the use of online social networks by libraries and information organizations is also increasingly prevalent and a growing tool that is being used to communicate with more potential library users, as well as extending the services provided to individual libraries.

Social media/social networking is one of the technological foundation of Web 2.0 which allow people to create, share, exchange information and ideas in virtual communities and network (Chakraborty, 2015). It is the social interaction among the people in which they can create, share or exchange information. Furthermore, social media depends on mobile and web based technologies to create highly interactive platforms through which individuals share, create and generate contents. According to Chu and Du (2015), social networking websites allow users to share interests and communicate with others. Barsky and Purdon (2006) emphasised that social networking websites collect data about members, store and share user profiles. These websites are free and allow users to easily create personal pages filled with content in the form of images, music and videos. Such websites function as a social network because members are able to share web pages with friends and search for new friends who have similar interests. Therefore, social media allow libraries to create, connect and share contents in varied formats, which may be texts, images, sounds, audios, files, documents, videos, web pages, URLs, DOIs, etc among themselves, for the purposes of reducing financial burden

on libraries, space saving and foster mutual relations. This development has led to academic libraries trying to adopt ICT oriented approach to services. Hence, the adoption of social media otherwise called web 2.0 applications in the foundation for the 21st century communication with sophisticated users while achieving set online objectives. Eze and Igwebuike (2015) in comfort (2017) described social media as technologies that facilitates social interaction, make possible collaboration and enable deliberation among stakeholders. Comfort (2017) noted that the wide application of social networking in different context appears to include universities and libraries as well. Social network services have made the user a participant, a co-creator and a builder of knowledge. It also enables users to have an open access to knowledge and also contribute local content to the social network space. (Comfort 2017) Akor and Salubuyi observe that it is an indispensable because it allows socialization among individuals, generates participatory opportunities and facilitates decisions.

The History of Social Media

The origin of social media is as old as man. Interaction with friends and families across long distances has been a concern of humans for centuries. As social animals, people have always relied on communication to strengthen their relationships. When face to-face discussions are impossible or inconvenient, humans have dreamed up plenty of creative solutions. The roots of social media stretch far deeper than being imagined. Although it seems like a new trend, die Social Media Sites, SMS of today like Facebook are the natural outcome of many centuries of social media, undergoing tremendous evolutions. The earliest methods of communicating across great distances included written correspondence delivered by hand from one person to another in the form of letters. The postal service came about 550 B.C. and die telegraph was invented in 1792 to alleviate the problem of letters being delivered by hand (Hendricks, 2013). The telegraph was faster than a horse or a rider but can only convey short messages and news. In 1865, the pneumatic post was discovered which utilizes underground pressurized air tubes to deliver letters quickly between recipients. In 1890 and 1891 the telephone and the radio were discovered respectively. These technologies are still in use today but much more sophisticated than the earlier ones in use. From the 20th century, technology began to change very rapidly with the invention of the first super computers in the 1940s and tin Internet. With the discovery of the Internet, users were able to upload a profile and make friends with other users. After the invention of computer and Internet, social media began to explode in popularity. This discovery led to the springing up of main social media sites like Facebook, Twitter, Myspace, Blog, LinkedIn e.t.c. Today, there is a tremendous variety of SNSs and many of them can be linked to allow cross-posting. This creates an environment where users can reach the maximum number of people without sacrificing the intimacy of person- to-person communication. All these social media or SNSs gave rise to terms like Web 2.0 and Library 2.0. The term web 2.0 was coined by Chad and Miller in 2005. Web 2.0 is the unifying term for all the

new technologies including the Social Networking Sites that enable users to interact and personalize websites. Soon after the term, Web 2.0 was coined in 2005; libraries and librarians began to discuss their relevance in library context. It was the existence of Web 2.0 technologies that made several librarians ask themselves, what these technologies could mean and do in die context of libraries and library services. This eventually led to the formulation of a derivative notion; library 2.0.

Library 2.0 means libraries using the Web 2.0 technologies (Social Networking Sites) in the provision of library services. In the views of a US Librarian; Michael Stephens (2005), the new collaboration and communication tools (Web 2.0 and Library 2.0) available today need to be used by librarians to serve the users better. With social media tools, libraries can now disseminate information, communicate their markets directly and. promote new releases. If libraries fail in this aspect, users may bypass them. The future of libraries depends on how well we meet the needs of today's young adult, who are more techno-fluent than most librarians. SNSs provide a new way for academic libraries to establish a two-way communication model with focus on the user. In other words, information flows in a multi dimensional pattern. That is, library to user, user to library, library to library, librarian to librarian and user to user thereby eliminating the one-way face to face stereotyped manner of library to user. It has also become a platform where users are producers of online content. Then, because of the user's contribution of the content, academic librarians are expected to measure and review content in order to serve users effectively as social media is now part of library services. This will avail the librarians the opportunity to censor what the users contribute to be posted.

Types of Social Media used for Resource Sharing

All social media platforms can be used for resource sharing in libraries. The extent of applications are mostly determined by the level of ICT skills of library staff, availability of ICT components (computer, telephone, network, storage devices, hardware, software, etc) and cost of maintenance, to mention a few. The most commonest social media that are being used for Resource Sharing are:

Weblog: Suraweera et al (2011) explains that the term weblog is refers to a webpage containing brief, chronologically arranged items of information. They are personal websites, usually maintained by a library, constantly updated with new information, library experiences, analysis, hyperlinks and commentaries. It is a medium of sharing resources among libraries and information organizations. It is a perfect solution for implementing a social network, due to a scant knowledge of HTML.

Facebook: A social media platform that allow libraries to share their resources. Apart from using it to promote the image of libraries among users, it is used by libraries to interact among themselves, facilitates easy access and retrieval of information resources and also enhance quick and easy delivery of resources among libraries. Library that

adopt Facebook for Resource Sharing will just create a friend list right after membership process and can specify those who can or cannot take part in the interaction (friend selective and limitation of authority) when they sign in. By so doing, participating libraries will just be offering comments to the timeline of host library.

Twitter: It is another social media platform that allow libraries to only share videos, texts, images, files, etc because of its major obstacle that has limited characters on it to 140. It is easier for libraries to share resources with twitter handle. All it requires a library is to register on Twitter platform and search for name of other library, then follow. By following each other, libraries will be having access to contents created and shared on this platform. Twitter also encourages global interactions among libraries that are following each other by simply click on "trending" and "hash tag" what they are searching for in the library world.

E-mail: It is the acronym for electronic mailing, which allows people, libraries or institutions (of common interest) to interact, communicate and share contents through a valid mailing address. It facilitates quick, easy and efficient sharing of information among libraries in any electronic format. It also supports multiple dissemination of contents by copying many libraries (cc) and ensures privacy by protecting other libraries (Bcc).

Ning: libraries use this networking tool to get connected with students, library associations and more. It can be used to share information within many people at a time. Example of Ning is the Nigerian association online forum which uses the platform to link it members and shares topical issues.

Flickr: this is a website for sharing photographs and images. The library can use it to send new images or photograph of library holdings and new arrivals.

Importance of Social Media to Resource Sharing in Libraries

Social media have become a dependable platform for the dissemination of information, forum for feedback mechanism, for research and of course for promotion (Akponhonor and Olise, 2015), and resource sharing. It is not surprising that libraries all over the world have not failed to embrace social media for Resource Sharing. The following are the importance of Social media to Resource sharing in libraries:

Saves time: Social media as a veritable tool for resource sharing have helped libraries in providing quick updates among themselves and provide forum for quick and speedy feedback from co-operating libraries. More so, social media make it easier to reach a large number of libraries in the most effective manner.

Enhances two-way communication: The most important element of communication can be achieved when the sender is passing message across to the receiver in an understandable format through the appropriate medium, and also allow the receiver to drop feedback. For example, You Tube facilitates feedback by allowing viewers of contents to provide comment below what they have viewed.

Saves cost and increases revenue: Villoldo (2012) categorically states that many social media technologies cost next to nothing. Using social media for resource sharing ensure a vast reach yet having a very low cost. It is possible to perform resource sharing with social media without costing a dime. In another vein, using social media for resource sharing in libraries boost revenues because it ensure speedy availability of information, thereby having positive effects on the library services and patronage.

Multiple Accessibility: Using social media for resource sharing ensure accessibility of single content among libraries by making the same resources available to different libraries at the same time. For example, a post on face book or twitter can be accessed by all libraries at once.

Eliminate Geographical Barrier: The use of social media for resource sharing have helped libraries in tackling geographic barrier. In this sense, content on the social media can be shared by libraries, irrespective of where they are situated.

Challenges of Social Media as a veritable tool for resource sharing in libraries

The use of social media for resource sharing in libraries has many factors mitigating it. The challenges associated with social media as veritable tool for resource sharing are:

Lack of required ICT facilities: the social media is a resource intensive tool that is always driven by the availability and disparate facilities that are networked together to achieved desired results. In the context of resource sharing in libraries, social media needs ICT facilities like computers, telephones, softwares, modems, electricity, etc, which will enhance adequate communication, collaboration, creation and sharing of resources among libraries.

Inadequate funding: funding is one of the major tools of administering and controlling the library. Paucity of fund that libraries across the world are facing is one of the mshot factors mitigating libraries from applying social media to resource activities in the library.

Content restrictions: this is a factor that limits the mode of accessing social media contents across geographical locations, libraries, people, network. Content restrictions may be inform of license of contents, digital right management technologies, invalid IP address, etc.

Inadequate media literacy skills of librarians: most library and information practitioners are not adequately equipped with the techniques of using and managing social media platforms in order to achieve resource sharing objectives. Insufficient media literacy skills is one of the major obstacles to integrating social media to resource sharing in libraries.

Erratic power supply and inadequate alternative source of power: Because the social media is a component of ICT, this is lies that it relies heavily on power supply before its benefits can be maximized. In the instance of resource sharing, co-operating libraries may find it difficult to share and disseminate resources among themselves in the absence of electricity supply.

Security and privacy: making resources available on social media by libraries have affected security and privacy of resources. For example, libraries may not be in agreement or contract anymore before they can have access to resources through social media platforms.

Ezeam and Igwesi (2012) in Comfort (2017) enumerated the following challenges of social media:

Poor Maintenance: maintenance culture is seriously lacking in most libraries in developing countries. The few available technologies are in poor conditions that may not support remote access to information.

Technophobia: Many library workers and users are afraid of handling computers. They make the traditional method of accessing library materials their comfort and are not eager to embrace change brought by modern technologies.

Low Government Intervention: There is little or no intervention of government in the area of information and communication technology (ICT) in public and school libraries.

Copyright Issue: Free access to information where people copy, paste and edit without acknowledging the author is a serious challenge to copyright manage met.

Poor Power Supply: The low supply of electricity discourages people (library staff and patrons) from participating in online forum.

Bandwidth Problem: Most libraries have limited bandwidth to support this practice. poor connectivity's can frustrate effective online participation.

Awareness: Most library users and staff in most developing countries are not aware of social media benefits. Even the few that are aware are still struggling to find out the productive uses of this site in respect of educational purpose. Users are not aware of the protocols involved in social communication. Getting student and Facebook users to move beyond the social aspect of Facebook to more serious and productive outcome is a challenge in Nigeria. In fact there is a general slogan in Nigeria that says: "leave Facebook and face your book". This point to the fact that Facebook is usually seen as a vehicle for unserious communication.

Lack of Training Opportunities: there is no good and effective infrastructure for ICT training in Nigeria to teach the usage of social media network particularly among the less privileged.

Conclusion

Social media is a new technology, offering a promising outreach options for librarians to provide a new platform to reach librarians and library resources without leaving the comfort of their homes. The emergence and use of social media in library service has undoubtedly enhanced quick dissemination of information to patrons. Social media has improved social connections, education, business, politics etc. (Comfort 2017). It is therefore disheartening to note that students and some library users, use social media to indulge in social misconducts and cybercrimes at the expenses of their academic

works. Social media has been a source of distraction for students making them to rely mostly on the social media sites for assignment and self reading because of it pleasurable nature making them to abandon the library. Similarly, the disparity and reliability on information content of the social networking media is another major issue of concern as students used unauthentic posting for their assignment, seminars and other academic works. There is a need for proactive awareness and training for librarians in the areas of monitoring the library users of social media in the library to avoid continuous negative use of social media by library users.

Recommendations

Based on the importance and challenges that are associated with social media, the following recommendations are made:

- Media literacy training should be provided for librarians at regular intervals. This will assist library and information practitioners in boosting their professional competencies and prepare them in advance to changing nature of information handling and management.
- Provision of stable power supply: the management of libraries, policy makers and other concerned stakeholders should ensure the availability of stable power supply, so that uninterrupted access to social media facilities can be ensured.
- Availability of ICT infrastructures and robust network: the infrastructural facilities and the needed ICT components like modem, routers, computers, etc, which are pivotal to the connection of internet should be available. Availability of strong and reliable network will ensure free flow of messages on the social media platforms.
- The Information Technology (IT) Section of the Nigerian library Association should always look into the issue of the ICT application into library operations, so that it will always be the backbone for communicating and sharing issues, trends and researches in IT application to library operations.
- Adequate funding should be ensured by libraries' managements, so that they can be financially buoyant to acquire the needed facilities for ICT connectivity in libraries.

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