

Issues And The Use Of Social Media In Reference Services By Academic Library Personnel In Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

Social Media platforms have revolutionized the patterns libraries serve their clientele as well as augment reference services delivery. This study seeks to address the issues militating against the integration of social media in reference services and the level of use by academic library personnel in Nigeria. Questionnaire instrument was used for data collection. 100 copies of questionnaire were distributed to the librarians and other library personnel at the national seminar in 2015 held at Kogi State University, Nigeria. 62 copies were filled and returned, given a response rate of 62%. The study found that academic libraries' personnel in Nigeria have embraced the regular use of social media, but their application of these media in reference services is quite low. The issues contending with the integration of social media in reference services by academic library personnel in Nigeria include lack of awareness and training on the application of social media to reference services, coupled with infrastructural and technological problems. The study advocated for awareness and training programmes on the use of social media within the academic community and provision of appropriate and adequate infrastructure in academic libraries.

Keywords: Social media, Reference services, Academic libraries, Nigeria, Information

INTRODUCTION

It is quite obvious that Information Communication Technology (ICT) is pushing very hard on all aspect of human endeavor; education, commerce, health, judiciary, transportation as well as information science profession. This constant pressure calls for a redefinition and reshuffling of libraries's daily activities and procedures in other to meet up with the changing technological trends and users' behavior. It is not enough to identify the tasks, reasons and the strategies used for the accomplishment of the professional duties, libraries' management and information professionals must equally come to terms with the target groups of users and their changing information seeking behavior in this global age where every human information need can be accessed at a speed light with little or no stress at the most reasonable cost. It behooves an information professional to realize the dynamism of the present environment, the era and the user groups that are being served and to synchronize, with adequate and appropriate innovation, in other to remain relevant. It is on this backdrop that proactive academic libraries and their personnel globally are providing automated systems, digitized library resources and further still an interactive platform for the users to interact and contribute to knowledge. This enhances the fulfillment of libraries basic mandate, which is to provide users with resources, services and facilities that facilitate teaching, learning and research. Reference service is an important aspect of academic libraries' responsibilities towards fulfilling their goal. Reference service provides a platform for interaction between the clienteles and library personnel which determines the future patronage of the library.

Some of the services offered by academic libraries include current awareness services, selective dissemination of information (SDI), monthly accession list, user education, inter

library-loan, borrowing of library materials either on reciprocal basis or on contractual basis, access to catalogue, manual or computerized, inter-library loan services, Internet services, subject literature search, and reference services (Aina, 2008 and Omeluzor, 2010). Chebe (2012) opined that reference and information service is an aspect of library services in which contact between the reader and library materials is established through staff assistance, matching the user with the library materials which could be print or electronic resources. Interestingly, these services can be facilitated and made possible remotely by the use of social media network platforms by the academic library personnel.

Social media has been defined by authors in various ways. According to Kaplan Andreas (2010) social media is "a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content." Social media are computer-mediated tools which allow people to create, share or exchange information, ideas, and pictures/videos in virtual communities and networks. "Social media has been broadly defined to refer to 'the many relatively inexpensive and widely accessible electronic tools that enable anyone to publish and access information, collaborate on a common effort, or build relationships'" Jump up (2013). Social media depend on mobile and web-based technologies to create highly interactive platforms through which individuals and communities share, co-create, discuss, and modify user-generated content. They introduce substantial and pervasive changes to communication between businesses, organizations, communities, and individuals which are the focus of the emerging field of techno self studies.

Internet users continue to spend more time with social media sites than any other type of site. The total time spent on social media in the U.S. across PC and mobile devices increased by 99 percent to 121 billion minutes in July 2012 compared to 66 billion minutes in July 2011 (Jump up 2011). This reinforces the need to maximally utilize social media platforms for user's services by academic libraries' personnel. Tang (2012) ascertained that the benefits of participating in social media have gone beyond simply social sharing to building reputation and bringing in career opportunities and monetary income. Many social media sites provide specific functionality to help users re-share content. For example, Twitter's retweet button, Pinterest pin or Tumblr's reblog function. Businesses may have a particular interest in viral marketing; nonprofit organisations and activists may have similar interests in virality.

Aichner (2015) ascertains that social media technologies take on many different forms such as blogs, business networks, enterprise social networks, forums, microblogs, photo sharing, products/services review, social bookmarking, social gaming, social networks, video sharing and virtual worlds. Popular among the social media are: Facebook, MySpace, Wikis, LinkedIn, Twitter, YouTube, Flickr, Whatsap and Library Thing.

Facebook is the most popular now because it is librarian- friendly, with many applications like JSTOR search, World Cat, and much more. With Facebook librarians can interact with users to know their information need. The Facebook page on the library's web site acts as a portal to the library. Academic libraries use Facebook to market the library and the services available with a library fan page. Libraries advertise opening hours, location, and other information. Libraries also create event invitations for programs as an additional forum to promote library activities, even a basic Facebook page can serve as a reminder to use the resources available at an academic library ((Chu and Meulemans, 2008 and Farkas, 2007a). In Academic institutions where the students are; libraries have taken advantage of MySpace site to post calendars, custom catalog search tools, and blog features to improve their presence.

Blogs provide an avenue for librarians to periodically post messages; share information on a particular subject or issue, and allow users to contribute to content. They can write articles, news on topical issues and expect an instant reaction from their users. Boxen (2008) ascertains that Blogs are web pages that consist of user-supplied content in chronological order. Wikis is a free online encyclopedia that gives a background knowledge and definition of concepts. It offers a platform for users to access, edit and contribute to content. This is a collaborative web page for developing web content. Wikis are open web pages that allow approved users to add and alter a page's content (Boxen, 2008). Wikis allow for higher use, participation and collaborative activities. With wikis Academic libraries can create subject links to resources on a chosen topic or for a particular class, including information regarding relevant databases and search tips tailored to that subject (Kroski, 2007b).

On the other hand through LinkedIn Librarians can get patrons connected with specialists in their particular field of interest. Librarians can use this platform to render specialized services such as Strategic Dissemination of Information (SDI), While YouTube allows individuals and organizations to post original videos. The site also enables users to embed their videos unto other web sites,

Twitter is a micro blogging application, to keep staff and patrons updated on daily activities, like frequently updated collections. Users can utilize this platform to type in short messages or status update. Librarians can use this platform to give users firsthand information on the on-going national elections. Users can send Instant Messages (IM), complaints, reshare content or ask questions on a particular issue and get a feedback on the spot using Twitter's retweet.

Furthermore, in institutions, events such as important highlights of inaugural lectures, conferences and workshops are disseminated via the YouTube. YouTube also allows individuals and organizations to post original videos and to embed their videos onto other web sites.

Additionally, Librarians and other library personnel can use Flickr to share and distribute new images of library collections. Cover page of new arrivals of both books and journals can be disseminated to users via Flickr. Flickr allows users to post photographs and to create discussion groups. While Flickr is known largely as a photo sharing web site, it also allows users to post videos. Academic librarians post photos of the library and its staff to provide a virtual tour of the library itself while simultaneously putting a human face to the building. Farkas (2007b) collaborate that "general search of Flickr reveals that most academic libraries use Flickr to post pictures of the library building and its staff". Academic libraries can also post material from special collections on a Flickr (Andrea, 2010). Library Thing as well serves as a tool that enriches the library OPAC. Once an account is created, a list of books with ISBNs is sent to Library Thing which sends back a piece of code which is pasted into the footer of the Library OPAC. Librarians can utilize this to send a list of current publications to users.

In addition to multimedia web sites, there are also social games that can be used in student outreach. Second Life is an online reality game that allows libraries to set up virtual libraries and to provide library services, particularly reference services. Academic librarian Brian Mathews (2007a, p. 10) states that: these digital libraries provide a 3-D environment with the potential to include video tutorials, audio players, subject guides, database and catalog searching, live assistance, instructional sessions, meeting areas, and other features..

Literature has shown that many academic librarians are advocating for the use of social Web platforms to reach out to their users (Farkas, 2007a, b; Mathews, 2006, 2007a; Milstein, 2009, Andrea, 2010). But there are still issues and uncertainty on the full integration of social media in reference services by academic libraries' personnel in Nigeria. Andrea (2010) reported the need for quantitative and qualitative research about the use of social networking tools within academic libraries.

Andrea and Holley, (2010) noted that there are several concerns about the use of social media. Such issues need to be considered by any academic library using social networking web sites or considering the implementation of social networking outreach programs. Andrea further ascertained that there are very few quantitative studies available about the broad effectiveness of the approach. This makes it extremely difficult to determine if the social networking efforts are worth librarian time in competition with other established outreach methods.

Another concern about social networking is low usage. Mathews, (2006) reported that from the messages sent to 1,500 undergraduate and graduate students on Facebook by an academic librarian, only 48 responded. Another study focusing on Wiki use in academic libraries found that six out of 21 libraries reported difficulties with low participation rates (Chu, 2009). Kim and Abbas (2010) ascertained that librarians were often more interested in the library's social media applications than students. Thus for social media usage in academic libraries to be sustained, both the librarians and the users must be adequately interested.

Another issue borders on the library personnel attitude to the use of social media. A lack of librarian support for social networking also risks uneven service levels and upgrading of the sites. Also if only selective liaisons are proactive in social networking to provide subject support, subject-based support may become unequal among disciplines. (Andrea, 2010).

The study conducted by Amina (2015) revealed that privacy concern is the major challenge librarians encounter in the use of social media for promoting library and information resources and services, other challenges are low level of technology penetration and network problem, lack of awareness, lack of funds.

From the ongoing, there are issues on the use of the media, and very few researches on the subject as it relates to Nigeria. Hence the need to identify the level of use, the problems encountered and solutions to enhance adequate integration of social media by academic libraries' personnel in Nigeria.

The general objective of this work is therefore to identify the issues and the use of social media in reference services by academic library personnel in Nigeria.

The specific objectives are to:

- a. Identify the types of social media sites that are in use by academic libraries' personnel in Nigeria.
- b. Find out reasons why academic library personnel visit the sites.
- c. Ascertain the frequency of visit to the sites by academic libraries' personnel in Nigeria.
- d. To determine the level of application of social media in reference service by libraries' personnel in academic libraries in Nigeria
- e. Determine the issues in the use of the social media for reference service in academic libraries in Nigeria.

- f. Proffer solutions to enhance the use of social media for reference service in academic libraries in Nigeria

RESEARCH METHOD

Questionnaire instrument was used for data collection. Survey questionnaire was designed for librarians and library staff involved in reference services in academic libraries in Nigeria. Section A consists of the respondents Bio data. Section B identifies the types of social media that are in use in academic libraries in Nigeria by libraries' personnel. Whereas section C highlights the frequency of use of the social media for reference services in academic libraries, Section D looks into the issues to the use of the social media in academic libraries in Nigeria, while Section E deals with suggestions on enhancing the use of social media for reference services in academic libraries in Nigeria. 100 copies of the questionnaire were distributed to libraries' personnel in Nigeria at the National seminar in 2011 held at Kogi State University, Nigeria. Simple frequencies and percentage were used in data analyses.

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FINDINGS

Table 4.1: Provides details of the institutions used for the study,

Table 4.1 Distribution of Respondents by Institutions

Name of Institution	Frequency	Percentage
UNICAL	3	4.8%
JABU	2	3.2%
MCPHERSON	1	1.6%
UNIJOS	1	1.6%
DELSU	2	3.2%
UNILAG	7	11.3%
FUNAAB	3	4.8%
AKWAPOLY	1	1.6%
OYSCAT	1	1.6%
FUTMINNA	2	3.2%
NIGER STATE	1	1.6%
UNIBEN	1	1.6%
ABIA STATE	1	1.6%
FED POLY ILARO	2	3.2%
FCE, OYO	1	1.6%
U.I	9	14.5%
LEAD CITY	1	1.6%
NATIONAL ASSLIB	1	1.6%
CODE OF CONDUCT LIB	1	1.6%
THE POLY IBADAN	2	3.2%
OYO STATE LIBRARY BOARD	2	3.2%
LAUTECH	2	3.2%
EACOED	1	1.6%
NISER LIB	2	3.2%
UNN	2	3.2%
KOGI STATE UNI	3	4.8%
OSUN STATE UNI	1	1.6%
THE SUN LIB	1	1.6%
AMERICAN UNIV. LIB.	2	3.2%
BABCOCK	1	1.6%
FUTO	1	1.6%
NIHORT	1	1.6%
TOTAL	62	100%

Table 4.1 shows the distributions of respondents by institutions, 32 universities were represented in the study. Both Federal, state and private universities were well represented. Out of 100 questionnaire copies distributed to the librarians in the universities in Nigeria, 62 copies were filled and returned, given a response rate of 62%. From the table the highest number of respondents came from University of Ibadan (UI) with 9(14.5%) respondents, seconded by University of Lagos (UNILAG) with 7(11.3) respondents, followed by University of Calaba (UniCal), Federal University of Abeokuta (FUNAAB) and Kogi State University has 3(4.8%) persons each. On the other hand Joseph Afe Babalola University (JABU), Delta State University (DELSU), Federal University of Mina (FUT MINNA), Federal Polytechnic Ilaro, Polytechnic Ibadan, Oyo State library Board, LAUTECH, American University Library that have

2 persons each. While the rest of the universities have 1 representative each. In all Federal Universities had the highest representatives with 15 universities, followed by state, which has 11 universities that participated in the study and 6 universities from state.

Table 4.5: The use of social media by academic libraries' personnel in Nigeria.

Question	Options	Frequency	Percentage %
Do you use Social Networking Sites?	Yes	54	87.1
	No	08	12.9%
	Total	62	100

The above table 4.5 reveals that many 54(87.1%) out of the 62 respondents were using social networking sites while only 08(12.9%) respondents were not. That means that social media usage in academic libraries in Nigeria is very high among libraries' personnel.

Table 4.6: Social media sites used by the academic library personnel

Question	Network Sites	Frequency	Percentage %
Identify the Social Networking Sites you use.	FACEBOOK	53	82.8%
	BLOGS	17	26.6%
	LINKEDIN	25	39.1%
	MY SPACE	4	6.2%
	YOU TUBE	23	35.9%
	FLICKER	5	7.8%
	LIBRARY THING	9	14.1%
	WHATSAPP	30	46.9%
	TWITTER	15	23.4%
NONE	5	7.8%	

The above table 4.6 highlights the different social media platforms being used by the respondents. It reveals that 53(82.8%) respondents were using facebook, 17(26.6%) respondents were using blogs, 25(39.1%) respondents were using linkedin, 04(6.2%) respondents were using My Space, 23 (35.9%) respondents were using You tube, 05 (7.8%) respondents were using flicker, 09(14.1%) respondents were using library thing, while 30(46.9%) respondents and 15(23.4%) others were using Whatsap and twitter respectively. Whereas 5(7.8%) persons were not using social networking site at all. The table shows that majority of the respondents are quite familiar with and do make use of different kinds of social media but facebook is the most used site, seconded by Whatsap, then LinkedIn and blogs.

Table 4.7: The Reasons Behind respondents use of sites

Question	Reasons	Frequency	Percentage %
What is the reason behind your attraction to these sites	Looks and layout	14	21.9%
	Business Networking	20	31.2
	Job/Research	30	46.9%
	Friends	22	34.4%
	Blogging	23	35.9%
	Security	05	7.8%
	Games	04	6.2%
	User – Friendly	25	39.1%
	Communities	09	14.1
Chatting	19	29.7	
	Total		

The above table 4.7 shows the various reasons behind the respondent's use of the social media sites. 14(21.9%) respondents used the sites for looks and layout, 20(31.2%) respondents used them for business networking, 30(46.9%) respondents used them for Job/Research, 23(36%) respondents used them for blogging Whereas 05(7.8%) respondents were using the sites for security, 04(6.2%) respondents were using them for games, 25(39.1%) respondents were using them for friendliness, 09(14.1%) respondents were using them for communities and 19(29.7%) respondents were using them for chatting. This table reveals that less than half of librarians use the social media sites for research and job related activities.

Table 4.8 Frequency of Respondents visit to the Social Networking Sites

Question	Options	Frequency	Percentage %
What is the Frequency of your visit to the Social Networking Sites?	Everyday	41	75.9%
	Twice a Week	08	14.8%
	Once a Week	04	7.4%
	Once a Month	01	1.9%
	Total	54	100

The above table 4.8 shows that majority of the respondents visit social networking sites every day. 41(75.9%) respondents were using the sites everyday, 08(14.8%) respondents were using them twice a week, 04(7.4%) respondents were using them once a week while 01(1.9%) respondent was using them only once a month. It could be deduced that most of the respondents visit social media sites every day.

Table 4.2 Social Media used by academic libraries' personnel in Nigeria for reference services

Question	Social Media	Frequency	Percentage %
Please, Identify the type of Social Media that you use in your reference services	FACEBOOK	27	42.2%
	BLOGS	08	12.5%
	LINKEDIN	09	14.1%
	MY SPACE	02	3.1%
	YOU TUBE	09	14.1%
	FLICKER	04	6.2%
	LIBRARY THING	09	14.1%
	WHATSAPP	14	21.9%
	TWITTER	06	9.4%
	NONE	20	31.2%

The above table 4.2 shows the social media being used by the respondents for reference purposes. It reveals that 27(42.2%) respondents were using the face book for reference purpose frequently, 08(12.5%) respondents were using blogs for the same purpose, 09(14.1%) respondents were using LinkedIn for the same purpose, 02(3.1%) respondents were using my space for reference services. The table further reveals that 09(14.1%) respondents were using you tube for reference services, 04(6.2%) respondents were using flicker for reference services, and 14(21.9%) were using twitter for such purpose. While 20(31.2%) persons were not using social media for reference services at all. Table 4.2 reveals that face book was the highest in usage by academic library personnel in Nigerian for reference services while MySpace is the least in use.

Table 4.3 The Frequency of Social Media use for Reference Services

Question	Options	Frequency	Percentage %
What is the Frequency of Social Media for Reference Services in your Library	Everyday	21	38.2%
	Twice a Week	09	16.4%
	Once a Week	03	5.5%
	Once a Month	03	5.5%
	None	19	34.5%
	Total	55	100

The above table 4.3 shows the frequency of social media use in reference services. The table reveals that only 21(38.2%) respondents used the social media for reference services everyday, 09(16.4%) respondent used the media for reference services twice a week and 03(5.5%) respondents use the media for such purpose once a month while 19(34.5%) persons do not use social media at all for reference services. Table 4.3 affirms the low use of social media platforms for reference services in academic libraries in Nigeria.

Table 4.4: Level of Application of the Social Media for Reference Services

Question	Options	Frequency	Percentage %
What is the Frequency of Social Media for Reference Services in your Library	Low use	18	38.3%
	Moderate use	13	27.7%
	High use	10	21.3%
	None Use	06	12.8%
	Total	47	100

The above table 4.4 shows the level of use of social media in reference services in their library. 18(38.3%) respondents affirmed that the rate of using social media to reference services in their library was low, 13 (27.7%) respondents affirmed that there was moderate, only 10(21.3%) respondents affirmed that the use was high while 06(12.8%) respondents affirmed that it was never used at all. Therefore social media use by librarians for reference services in academic libraries in Nigeria is very low when the number of respondents that indicated none use, low use and even the 15 persons who did not answer the questions are put together. Table 4.4 still affirms the low use of social media platforms for reference services in academic libraries in Nigeria.

Table 4.5: Issues to the use of Social Media in the Library

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
1. Lack of awareness of the various kinds of social media and their application to reference services	18 34.6%	21 40.3%	07 13.5%	06 11.5%	52 (100%)
2. Lack of librarians training on the application of the various kinds of mass media to reference services	17 32.1%	27 50.9%	08 15.1%	01 1.9%	53 (100%)
3. Dogmatism on the part of librarians	07 32.1%	27 50.9%	08 15.1%	01 1.9%	50 (100%)
4. There is infrastructural problem	16 29.6%	31 57.4%	06 11.1%	01 1.9%	54 (100%)
5. Technical support is a challenge	18 35.3%	26 51%	06 11.8%	01 2%	51 (100%)
6. There is a security issue	08 15.4%	25 48.1%	16 30.8%	03 5.8%	52 (100%)
7. Technophobia is a limitation	10 20.4%	20 40.8%	17 34.7%	02 4.1%	49 (100%)
8. Lack of access to the internet	17 31.5%	22 40.7%	10 18.5%	05 9.3%	54 (100%)
9. There is inadequate user's education	12 23.1%	27 51.9%	11 21.2%	02 3.8%	52 (100%)
10. Inadequate funding	21 39.6%	26 49.1%	05 9.4%	01 1.9%	53 (100%)

table 4.5 shows the constraint to the use of social media in the library. Item 1 on the table shows that 39(74.9%) respondents agreed that lack of awareness of the various kinds of social media and their application to reference services while 13(25.1%) respondent disagreed. Item 2 shows that 44(83%) respondents agreed that lack of librarians training on the application of the various kinds of mass media to reference service while 9(17%) respondents disagreed. Item 3 on the table shows that 32 (64%) respondents agreed that dogmatism on the part of the librarians is a constraint to the use of social media in the library while 18(36%) respondents disagreed. Item 4 shows that 47(87%) respondent agreed that infrastructural problem is a constraint to the use of social media in the library while 07(13%) respondents disagreed. Item 5 shows that 44(86.3%) respondents agreed that technical support is a challenge to the use of social media in the library while 07(13.7%) respondents disagreed. Item 6 shows that 33(63.5%) respondents agreed that security issue is a constraint to the use of social media in the library while 19(36.5%) disagreed. Item 7 shows that 30(61.2%) respondents agreed that technophobia is a limitation to the use of social media in the library while 19(38.8%) respondents disagreed. Item 8 shows that 39(72.2%) respondents agreed that lack of access to the internet is a constraint to the use of social media in the library while 15(27.8%) respondent disagreed. Item 9 shows that 39(75%) respondents agreed that inadequate user's education is a constraint to the use of social media in the library while 13(25%) respondents disagreed. Item 10 shows that 47(88.7%) respondents agreed that inadequate funding is a constraint to the use of social media in the library while 06(11.3%) respondents disagreed.

Table 4.6: Suggestions on Solution to enhance the use of Social Media for Reference Services

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
1. Awareness through seminars/flyers and brochures	29 58%	21 42%	0 0%	0 0%	50 (100%)
2. Workshops/training for librarians on the use of mass media for reference services	36 66.7%	18 33.3%	0 0%	0 0%	54 (100%)
3. Attitudinal change on the part of librarians	24 43.6%	28 50.9%	03 5.5%	0 0%	55 (100%)
4. Provision of appropriate and adequate infrastructure/internet facilities	35 64.8%	19 35.2%	0 0%	0 0%	54 (100%)
5. Advocacy through interpersonal communication within the academic community	19 35.8%	32 60.4%	02 3.8%	0 0%	53 (100%)
6. Workshop/training on use of mass media in reference services and faculties	25 46.3%	28 51.9%	01 1.9%	0 0%	54 (100%)
7. User's enlightenment	26 48.1%	28 51.9%	0 0%	0 0%	54 (100%)
8. Adequate funding	34 63%	19 35.2%	01 1.8%	0 0%	54 (100%)

The above table 4.6 shows data on suggestions on solution to enhance the use of social media for reference services. Item 1 on the table shows that 50(100%) of those that responded to the question agreed that awareness through seminars/flyers and brochure are solution to enhance the use of social media for reference services while none of the respondents disagreed. Item 2 on the table shows that 54(100%) respondents agreed that workshops/training for librarians on the use of mass media for reference service is a solution while none of the respondent disagreed. Item 3 shows that 52(94.5%) respondents agreed that attitudinal change on the part of librarians is a solution to enhance the use of social media for reference service while only 03(5.5%) respondents disagreed. Item 4 shows that 54(100%) of the respondents agreed that provision of appropriate infrastructure will enhance the use of social media for reference services while none of the respondents disagreed. Item 5 ascertains that 51(96.2%) respondents agreed that advocacy through interpersonal communication within the academic community will enhance the use of social media for reference services while 02(3.8%) respondents disagreed. Item 6 shows that 53(98.2%) respondents agreed that workshop/training on the use of mass media in reference services will enhance the use of social media for reference services while 01(1.9%) respondent disagreed. Item 7 shows that 54(100%) respondents agreed that user's education enlightenment will enhance the use of social media for reference service while none of the respondents disagreed. Item 8 shows that 53(98.2%) respondents agreed that adequate funding will enhance the use of social media for reference services while 1(1.8%) respondent disagreed.

DISCUSSIONS

From the findings, majority of the academic library personnel in Nigeria are quite familiar with and do make use of different kinds of social media. The social media platforms being used by the academic library personnel are Facebook, Blogs, linkedin, MySpace, Youtube, flicker, library

thing, Whatsapp and Twitter, with Facebook being the most preferred site, seconded by Whatsapp. Despite the high use of the various kinds of social media by academic libraries' personnel in Nigeria, the application of the media for reference services in Nigerian academic libraries is quite low. Though most of the academic library personnel in Nigeria regularly make use of social media platforms, but they do so for reasons other than reference services. Such reasons include interaction with friends, chatting, games, looks and layout and for business networking. It is acceptable for the library personnel to utilise these platforms for personal interactions, but it is also imperative that the core of their profession which is to attend to the library users should be given utmost priority when using these platforms during the working hours.

The findings identified various kinds of problems inhibiting the use of social media by academic library personnel in Nigeria. Such impediments include: Lack of awareness on the various kinds of social media and their application to reference services, dogmatism on the part of some librarians and library personnel (inability to conform/adapt to changes), infrastructural and technological challenges amongst others. Furthermore, there are non regular trainings to enhance and upgrade the library personnel on the emerging technologies and how to apply them to reference services delivery and other aspects of librarianship. Even where such trainings exist, quite a few staff is usually granted approval for sponsorship due to limited library fund allocation. Also some librarians are still dogmatic in the manner they manage the library, including their approach to reference services, they find it difficult to accommodate the changes and innovation ICT is bringing to librarianship. All these coupled with inadequate infrastructure and technical issues are hindering the full integration of social media in reference services in Nigerian academic libraries.

To salvage the situation, the study advocated for the following: Positive attitudinal change on the part of librarians towards the use of technology in the management of libraries; and awareness on the emerging technologies through seminars/flyers and brochure. Also workshops/training for librarians on the use of social media for reference services, provision of appropriate and adequate infrastructure, internet facilities, and advocacy through interpersonal communication within the academic community, user's enlightenment and adequate funding are very imperative.

CONCLUSION

Academic libraries' personnel in Nigeria have embraced the regular use of social media, but the application of these media in reference services is quite low. To achieve maximum impact of ICT and full integration of the social media in the area of reference services in Nigeria, there is need for regular trainings for the library personnel on the emerging technologies, their relevance to the profession and how to apply them for reference services and other aspects of librarianship.

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