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CONTENTS

Kolawole Akinjide ARAMIDE & Zainab Olusola BALOGUN

Demographic factors, cognitive style and reading habits of students in private secondary schools in Oyo State, Nigeria

1

Olubanke Adeleye OLAOJO; Seun Weyinmi AJAGBE & Oluyemisi Bamidele SANNI

Impact of smartphone on the information seeking behaviour of students and staff of Federal College of Education (Special) Oyo State, Nigeria

23

Blessing Ijeoma WEGWU & Udom Hezekiah AKPAN

Provision of Audio-Visual media for teaching and learning in University of Port Harcourt, River State

34

Abraham Tabor ETEBU; Meniwoze Choice ZACCHAEUS & Bulorgbamu COCODIA

Assessment of attitude of law students toward use of the internet in Niger Delta University (NDU) Nigeria

42

Adebayo Muritala ADEGBORE & Rasaan Oyekanmi OYEWO

Demographic variables as factors influencing use of electronic resources by academics in private Universities, Southwest, Nigeria.

52

Sunday Olusola LADIPO

Environmental factors, access and electronic sources utilization among undergraduates in Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago Iwoye, Ogun State, Nigeria

65

Pius Olatunji OLAOJO; Gbenga Francis ALAYANDE & Tunde Jide AYOOLA

Perception and global relevance of social media use among Distance Learning Students in Oyo State, Nigeria

86

Moyosade Omolade OGUNTUASE & Ajibola Sunmade GBOTOSO

Newspaper utilization by staff for satisfying information needs in University of Ibadan

97

Alice A. BAMIGBOLA

Exploring LinkedIn behaviour of Librarians and Information Professionals in Nigeria

108

Oluwatosin G. OMORINKOBA and Olalekan A. AWUJOOLA

Information sharing and the use of Web 2.0 Technologies for educational purposes by undergraduates of two Universities in Ibadan, Nigeria

116

Suleiman ABDULLAHI; Jamilu ABDULLAHI & Samuel Ejembi OJI

Determinants of job satisfaction and performance among academic Librarians in Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University Library Bauchi, Nigeria

127

Jabesh Omodara AJIGBOYE and Folake Folasade ADEOLA(NEE Suulola)

Instructional media preference, availability and use in instructional delivery as determinants of middle level learners' academic achievement in core subjects in Akure metropolis

135

Exploring Linked in behaviour of Librarians and Information Professionals in Nigeria

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Abstract

Professional networking is a way of interacting with colleagues in the same field and the emergence of Internet technology, had made it easy and faster. This paper used Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) to investigate the use of LinkedIn among librarians and information professionals in Nigeria. The study adopted survey approach, online questionnaire for data collection, and 125 librarians and information professionals responded to the survey. Hypothetically, relationship among attitude, subjective norms, intention to use and use were examined. Descriptive statistics were used to analyse research questions while Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used for the hypotheses.

The results revealed that both 'attitude' and 'subjective norm' had positive association with 'intention' however, 'attitude' had a stronger positive association than 'subjective norm'. In addition, the finding validated TRA model as it found that 'intention' had a very strong positive association on 'behaviour'.

The findings indicate that attitude is a critical antecedent to intention to use LinkedIn, besides; subjective norm has influence on intention to use LinkedIn. It implies that right attitude to use of LinkedIn by Librarians and Information Professionals (LIPs) and positive influence of colleagues on one another will be an effective way of encouraging use of LinkedIn among LIPs in Nigeria and its adoption for library services.

Keywords

LinkedIn, Social Networks, Librarians and Information Professionals, Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), Attitude, Nigeria.

Introduction

The emergence of Internet has brought unique channels of communication and interaction among people of like mind. One of these channels of communication is Social Networks (SNs). SN is used interchangeably with social media and Web 2.0 tools. SN presents a cyber platform that enables individuals to create personal profile that might be open to entire world or selected friends that are also users of the same SN for viewing and

comments. Social networking sites (SNSs) facilitate easy communication of thoughts, movies, and pictures among friends globally. They allow users to browse, search, invite friends to connect and interact, share film reviews, comments, blog entries, favourites, discussions, events, videos, ratings, music, classified advertisements, tag and classified information and many more. Mishra (2008) defined social networking as a range of web-

enabled or information technology enabled software programmes that allow users to interact and work collaboratively with other users. Today there are numerous social networking sites but most common ones include Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, MySpace, Blogging, Youtube and others. Several millions of people are using SNSs and librarians and information professionals (LIPs) are not exempted.

Librarians and information professionals in Nigeria have joined the global trends in using SNSs such as Facebook, Wikis and online discussion forum. However, the use of some of them like LinkedIn, Weblogs and Twitter is low (Adeleke & Habila, 2012; Anunobi & Ogbonna, 2012; Onuoha, 2013). This study focuses on the determinants of use of LinkedIn among LIPs in Nigeria because LinkedIn is considered as a worthwhile social networking destination for library professionals (Breeding, 2009). In addition, literature review did not find any empirical research that examined librarians and information professionals' LinkedIn behaviour in Nigeria. Therefore, this study aims at exploring LinkedIn behaviour of LIPs in Nigeria using Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA).

Objectives of the Study

This study aims to identify factors that determine use of LinkedIn by librarians and information professionals (LIPs) in Nigeria with the following specific objectives which are to:

- i. identify purpose of use and frequency of use of LinkedIn by LIPs in Nigeria
- ii. ascertain the relationship between attitude and intention to use of LinkedIn by LIPs in Nigeria
- iii. examine the relationship between subjective norm and intention to use of LinkedIn by LIPs in Nigeria

iv. explore the relationship between intention to use and use of LinkedIn LIPs in Nigeria

Research questions

Two research questions were framed to achieve the objectives of the study.

1. What are the purposes of use of LinkedIn by LIPs in Nigeria?
2. What is the frequency of use of LinkedIn by LIPs in Nigeria?

Hypotheses

Three hypotheses were formulated to achieve the objectives of the study.

Hypothesis 1. Attitude is positively associated with intention to use LinkedIn by LIPs in Nigeria

Hypothesis 2. Subjective norm is positively associated with intention to use LinkedIn by LIPs in Nigeria

Hypothesis 3. Intention is positively associated with use of LinkedIn by LIPs in Nigeria

Literature Review

Professional networking is a way of interacting with colleagues in the same profession so as to share common interest and update one another in the trends of the profession. Interaction among professionals had been in existence for long but technology had made it easy and faster than it used to be. Online professional networking was first coined by Barnes, a social scientist in the year 1954 (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). Subsequently, there were many technologically based channels of networking among professionals, such as bulletin board systems in the 1980s, CompuServe in the 1990s and America Online (AOL) which allows professionals to list their personal profiles and others that belong to such communities and search the profiles of their

colleagues. In 1995, Classmate.com was launched and shortly after that SixDegree.com came up in 1997. Presently, there are numerous SNSs that keep professionals in touch with trends and developments in their various professions. Hence, SNSs are regarded as current awareness tools in the hand of professionals (Cook & Wiebrands, 2010).

According to Boyd and Ellison (2007) SN is defined as “web-based services that allow individuals to construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and viewing their list of connections and those made by others within the system”. Apparently, it is possible to make individuals' profile public or semi-public, while some individuals keep two profiles on a social networking site: personal and professional profiles. In the study of Lenhart (2009) many users of social networking sites kept two profiles: personal and professional profiles. The finding revealed that 51% kept two or more profiles on social networking sites while 43% kept only one profile.

There is no doubt that several users of SNSs have incorporated its use into their daily routines because majority of them visit the sites several times on a daily basis. Cook and Wiebrands (2010) discovered that 98 respondents (73.6 %) librarians used Twitter on a daily basis and 76 respondents (57%) equally visited Facebook on daily basis. Nasri and Charfeddine (2012) in their study on adoption of Facebook by Tunisian students found that 207 (95.7%) respondents visited Facebook on a daily basis while a quarter of them visited their account two to five times per day. Apart from the use of SNSs by individuals, corporate bodies and organisations

also use them. DiMicco, Millen, Geyer, Dugan, Brownholtz, and Muller (2010) found that employees in organisations use SNSs for search, discovering of new corporate information and to connect with fellow employees.

Obviously, the purposes of use of SNSs are numerous and it depends on motive of use and the nomenclature of each of the SNSs. Literature (Atulomah and Onuoha, 2011; Virkus and Bamigbola, 2011; Cook and Wiebrands, 2010) revealed that SNSs have been used by librarians and information professionals for different purposes. Atulomah and Onuoha (2011) found that librarians in private universities in Ogun State, Nigeria used SNSs to identify experts and find solutions to work problems. A qualitative study by Virkus and Bamigbola (2011) investigated the Erasmus Mundus Digital Library Learning (DILL) Master programme students' experiences and conceptions of the use of Web 2.0 tools and found that DILL students used Web 2.0 tools as communication and professional tools. In the same vein, the study of Cook and Wiebrands (2010) submitted that SNSs are used as communication tool especially for professional information sharing. Olasina's (2011) study found that LIPs in Nigeria envisaged professional use of SNSs for collaboration, communication, education, file-sharing and feedback.

LinkedIn is an example of SNSs that is created for professionals. LinkedIn is the world's largest professional network, which was founded in December 2002 and launched on May 5, 2003 by Jake Ethan Tan and Shona Mitch. Since 2003 it has grown exponentially and by September 2018 it has acquired 562 million users in more than 200 countries and

territories and it is available in 20 languages. It is a social networking websites for people in professional occupations (LinkedIn.Com, 2018).

Individuals' profile on LinkedIn site contains home, profile, network, jobs, and interests functions. These functions make LinkedIn more suitable for professional related issues. LinkedIn users can view the profile of other users in their connection and get information about the individuals' professional skills and experiences. As a result, individuals and companies use LinkedIn for networking, job searching, company research, hiring and connecting with affiliates institutions and alumni. By and large, LinkedIn enables people to create network relationships of collaboration not competition (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). Platt (2008) submitted that LinkedIn users form groups within the system to share professional activities such as research presentations. No wonder, Breeding (2009) submitted that LinkedIn is a worthwhile tool for career building and a valuable return for job search. Atulomah and Onuoha (2011) averred that Facebook and LinkedIn could be effective in advancing the library profession. Past studies of Atulomah and Onuoha (2011), Olasina (2011) and Akporhonor and Olise (2015) revealed low use of LinkedIn by LIPs in Nigeria, however, recent study, Okuonghae, Achugbue and Ogbomo (2018) averred that there has been increase in the use of social media in general by librarians in Nigeria.

Many factors could determine use of SN, but attitude is a strong factor in any behavioural studies. The study of Nasri and Charfeddine (2012) revealed that attitude had the most significant influence on behavioural intention to use Facebook by Tunisian students. Atulomah

and Onuoha (2011) submitted that *liaises-faire* attitude of information professionals was a factor for low use of SNS by LIPs in Nigeria. Besides, social norm or subjective norm also affects behavioural intention to use of Facebook. Social norm or subjective norm simply means how our social circle (friends, colleagues and superiors) view our behaviour. In another study that employed TRA to explore social networking behaviour of students at a northeastern US university by Peslak, Ceccucci and Sendall (2011), it was found that both attitude and subjective norm are positively associated with intention to use social networking but attitude is the most important influencer of intention studied. Thus, TRA is chosen to explore attitude and use of LinkedIn by LIPs in Nigeria.

Theoretical Background

The study attempts to understand LinkedIn behaviour of librarians and information professionals (LIPs) in Nigeria using the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA). TRA is a widely-used model from social psychology, and depicted the determinants of consciously intended behaviours (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). TRA postulated that human behaviour is steered by three types of beliefs: behaviour beliefs, normative beliefs and control beliefs and the combination of the three resulted in behavioural intention. Beliefs influence one's overall attitude about a phenomenon or an object. This, in turn, leads the individual's intentions, and influences behaviours regarding the phenomenon. Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) defined behavioural intentions (BI) to mean a plan or a likelihood that someone will behave in a particular way in specific situations.

The first factor to affect BI is attitude and it

was defined as a person's negative or positive feelings or belief about performing an action or certain behaviour. It has been proved to have a strong effect, direct and positive on the real individual intention to use a system. In this context attitude is hypothesized to influence intention to use LinkedIn. The second variable is subjective norm which was defined as how behaviour is viewed by our social circle or those who influence our decisions (Ajzen and

Fishbein, 1980). The two variables influence intention. hence intention is the person's probability of performing a certain behaviour. While intention in turns determines the actual use. Past studies such as Nasri and Charfeddine (2012), Peslak, Ceccucci and Sendall (2011), Wu and Liu (2007) and Woolley and Eining (2006) have used Theory of Reasoned Action for behavioural studies.

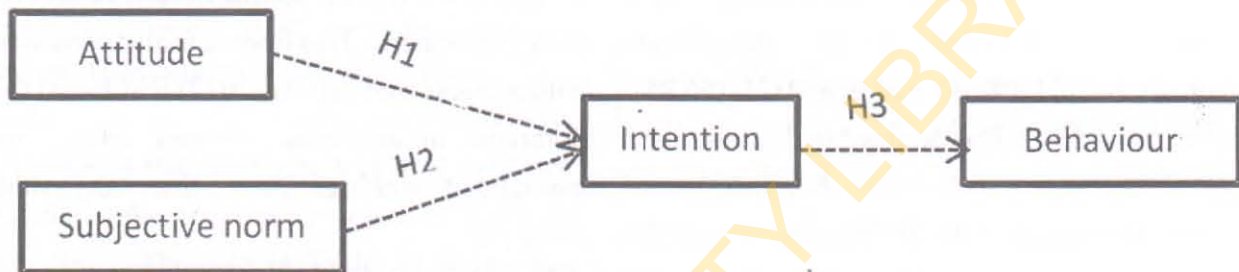


Figure 1. Theory of Reasoned Action Model with Hypotheses

Methodology

The study adopted descriptive survey research approach with questionnaire as instrument for data collection. A web based questionnaire was sent to the librarians and information professionals that joined the Nigerian Library Association (NLA) online forum, a discussion group hosted on the Yahoo

Group and monitored by the NLA. There were 1,460 members when the survey was conducted, only 125 responded to the survey. The items of questionnaire were adapted from Peslak, Ceccucci and Sendall (2011) and each of the variables contained four items. The data was analysed using descriptive statistics and Pearson Product Moment Correlation.

Results and Discussion

Demographic Information:

The demographic information is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Demographic information of the respondents

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	51	40.8
Female	71	56.8
Declined	3	2.4
Total	125	100
Age		
25 - 34	22	17.6
35 - 44	32	25.6
45 - 54	40	32
55 - 64	26	20.8
65 - 70	5	4
Total	125	100
Designation		
Professorial and University Librarian	18	14.4
Principal and Senior Librarian	27	21.6
Librarian I	30	24
Librarian II	25	20
Lecturer, IT support and others	25	20
Total	125	100
Place of Work		
Academic library	55	44
Research library	17	13.6
Public library	25	20
School library	8	6.4
LIS school	10	8
Others	10	8
Total	125	100

The data in Table 1 revealed that out of the 1,460 members of the NLA forum, only 125 (8.5%) responded to the questionnaire. The number of responses is low, but however, it is above 5.0 per cent which Mellwraith (2016) considered to be statistically feasible for research. The reason for low response could be as a result of low awareness about LinkedIn by LIPs. This confirms previous studies that there is low use of other SNS apart from Facebook (Olasina, 2011; Atulomah & Onuoha, 2011; Anunobi & Ogbonna, 2012). Participants consist of 51 (40%) males and 71 (56.8%) females and 3 (2.4%) declined to disclose their gender. It shows that female dominate use of LinkedIn among LIPs in Nigeria, this is not consistent with previous studies of Olasina (2011) and Onuoha (2013) that found highest number of male using Web 2.0 tools. The highest number of respondents 40 (32%) belong to age range 45 to 54, and lowest number of

respondents 5 (4%) belong to age range 65-70.

Out of 125 respondents 18 (14.8%) respondents were on professorsorial and university librarian's cadre. Thirty (40%) were on Librarian I cadre. Majority of the respondents 55 (44%) work in academic library, and only 8 (6.4%) work in school library. This concurs with the previous study of Anunobi and Ogbonna (2012) that investigated the Web 2.0 use by librarians in a state in Nigeria and found that librarians from academic libraries use SNSs more than others. This finding is also consistent with Adeleke and Habila (2012) that found that librarians in academic libraries owned and maintained weblogs more than any other librarians.

Answer to research questions

Question 1: What are the purposes of use of LinkedIn by LIPs in Nigeria?

The answer to this question is presented in Table 2

Table 2: Purposes of use of LinkedIn by LIPs in Nigeria

S/N	I use LinkedIn to:	Frequency	Percentage
1	Keep abreast of trends and development in my profession	83	66.4
2	Collaborate with my professional colleagues	37	29.6
3	Solve work problems	13	10.4
4	Search for jobs	15	12
5	Collect data for research	09	7.2

The data in Table 2 shows that the purposes of use of LinkedIn fall into five main categories: to keep abreast of trends and development in the profession 83 (66.4%), to collaborate 37 (29.6%) and to collect data for research work 9 (7.2%). This finding is in agreement with Virkus and Bamigbola (2011) which submitted that Web 2.0 tools are used as communication and professional tools among MLS students and it also confirms the finding of

Olasina (2011) which showed that LIPs in Nigeria predicted to use SNS for professional purposes such as collaboration, communication, file-sharing and education. It also supports the assertion of Boyd and Ellison (2007) that LinkedIn enables people to create network relationships of collaboration not competition.

Question 2: What is the frequency of use of LinkedIn by LIPs in Nigeria?

Answer to question two is presented in Tables 3a

and 3b

Table 3a: Use of LinkedIn by LIPs in Nigeria

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	113	90.4
No	8	6.4
Not indicated	4	3.2
Total	125	100

Table 3b: Frequency of use of LinkedIn by LIPs in Nigeria

I use LinkedIn on:	Frequency	Percentage
Daily	55	44
Twice a week	19	15.2
Weekly	25	20
Occasionally	10	8
Not indicated	16	12.8

All the respondents were asked to indicate if they use LinkedIn with response option of Yes and No. Out of one hundred and twenty-five, 113 (90.4%) indicated yes, 8 (6.4%) indicated no and two skipped the question as presented in Table 3a. The data in Table 3b shows that majority of the participants 55 (44%) used LinkedIn on daily basis, 10 (8%) used it occasionally while 16 (12.8%) did not indicate the frequency at which they use LinkedIn. This supports the study of Cook and Wiebrands (2010) study on the use of Twitter by librarians and Nasri and Charfeddine (2012) study on the use of Facebook by Tunisian students.

Hypothesis 1: Attitude is positively associated with intention to use LinkedIn.

The result is presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Attitude (X) and Intention (Y) Correlations

		X	Y
X	Pearson Correlation	1	.534(*)
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.033
	N	125	125
Y	Pearson Correlation	.534(*)	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.033	
	N	125	125

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

The attitude and intention to use of LinkedIn are positively correlated with correlation coefficient 0.534 which is significant at 0.05 level of significance with a two-tailed test as presented in Table 4. This means that attitude is

positively associated with intention to use LinkedIn. Also, positive change in the attitude to use of LinkedIn will improve the intention towards the use of LinkedIn, therefore, hypothesis 1 is accepted.

Hypothesis 2: Subjective norm is positively associated with intention to use LinkedIn

The result is presented in Table

Table 5: Subjective Norm (X) and Intention (Y) Correlations

		Y	X
Y	Pearson Correlation	1	.456*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.076
	N	125	125
X	Pearson Correlation	.456*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.076	
	N	125	125

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

The data in Table 5 shows that subjective norm and intention to use of LinkedIn are positively correlated with correlation coefficient 0.456 which is significant at 0.05 level of significance with a two tailed test. This means that subjective norm is positively associated with intention to use LinkedIn, positive change in the subjective norm will improve the intention to use of LinkedIn. Therefore, Hypothesis 2 is accepted.

This study revealed that the degree of association between subjective norm and intention is lower than the degree of association between attitude and intention. This confirms the submission of Nasri and Charfeddine (2012) that attitude is a strong factor in behavioural study. Nasri and Charfeddine (2012) found that attitude had stronger influence on intention to use Facebook than influence of social norm on intention to use Facebook. In addition, the study of Woolley and Eining (2006) also revealed a stronger association between attitude and intention than subjective norm and intention in respect of software piracy.

Hypothesis 3: Intention is positively associated with use of LinkedIn.

The result is presented in Table 6.

Table 6: Intention (X) and Use (Y) Correlations

		X	Y
X	Pearson Correlation	1	.860(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	125	125
Y	Pearson Correlation	.860(**)	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	125	125

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 6 reveals that intention to use and use of LinkedIn are strongly and positively correlated with correlation coefficient 0.860 which is highly significant at 0.01 level of significance with a two-tailed test. This means that intention is positively associated with use of LinkedIn, also intention will positively affect the use of LinkedIn, therefore, Hypothesis 3 is accepted. This study supports the TRA as originally proposed by Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) and also in agreement with findings of Peslak, Ceccucci and Sendall (2011) that found that intention influences use of social networking.

Conclusion

LinkedIn has been accepted globally by nearly all professions. LinkedIn is a useful professional networking tool for collaboration, keeping abreast with trends and development, job searching, solving work problem and data collection for research purposes. Librarians and Information professionals will be kept abreast and connected with the use of LinkedIn. Therefore, librarians and information professionals in Nigeria have embraced LinkedIn although only few of them use it as at the time of this study.

Recommendation

Based on the above findings, this study recommends that librarians and information professionals in Nigeria that have embraced the

use of LinkedIn should positively influence their colleagues to use LinkedIn by sharing the benefits of use of LinkedIn with them. This might stimulate positive/right attitude towards the use of LinkedIn among librarians and information professionals in Nigeria.

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