

Chapter 18

Use of Social Media in Libraries and Impact on Undergraduates

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ABSTRACT

This chapter examined the use of social media in libraries and impact on undergraduates. The study covers concepts of utilization of social media: benefits, impact, and challenges that affect the use of social media and academic performance of undergraduate students. The concepts generally implied that social media is the use of technology as the best medium to explore wide area of knowledge to produce positive impact on academic performance of students. There is a direct relationship between social media usage and the academic performance of students. It was recommended among others that awareness programs of use of social media platforms should be provided by the university and library to students; access to use of social media resources and services by librarians should be provided to students; educational forums that will facilitate group collaboration and discussion on academic performance should be promoted in universities; connectivity to social media network sites and internet should be improved to facilitate instant information search by students.

INTRODUCTION

Modern communication technology has transformed the entire world into a “Global village”. Technology is like two sides of a coin with negative and positive sides. It helps people to be better informed, enlightened and keeping abreast with world developments. Technology exposes mankind to a better way of doing things (Osharive, 2015). Currently, there is a growing awareness and increase in the use of Social Media (SM). Social network is a social structure made up of individuals or organizations called “nodes”, which are tied (connected) by one or more specific types of interdependency, such as friendship, kinship, common interest, financial exchange, dislike, sexual relationships or relationships of beliefs, knowledge or prestige (Adeboye, 2012, cited in Asemah and Edegoh, 2012). Social network

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can also be referred to as a map of specified ties, such as friendship, between the nodes being studied. The nodes, to which an individual is connected are the social contacts of that individual. Social networking sites include: Yahoo Messenger, Facebook Messenger, Blackberry Messenger (BBM), Google talk, Google+ Messenger, iPhone, Androids. These networking sites are used by most people to interact with old and new friends, physical or internet friends (Adeboye, 2012, cited in Asemah and Edegoh, 2012). Martn, (2008) & Lusk, (2010) also stated that social media is the use of Facebook, Blogs, Twitter, My Space and LinkedIn for the purpose of communication, sharing photos as well as videos.

The growth of social media over the years has changed the way users communicate, collaborate and exchange knowledge through the various platforms (Wasko, Teigland and Faray, 2009). Similarly, the World Wide Web has been radically transformed, shifting from an information repository to a more social environment where users are not only passive receivers or active harvesters of information but creators of content (Bruns, 2008). Social media is built on the idea of how people know and interact with each other. It gives people the power to share, making the world more open and connected with each other. Social networking has a vital influence on our lives. Social media provides data easy and quick information within a fraction of seconds. Social media applications therefore allow users to converse and interact, create, edit and share textual, visual and audio content. Social media applications are open rather than closed. Social networking websites provide tools by which librarians communicate, share information and create relationships among users. The popularity of social networking websites has affected social interaction due to technological changes. The way library users interact and talk to each other has changed. These users now socialize through the internet. Social networking websites have also affected our social interaction by changing the way we interact face-to-face, receive information, and the dynamics of social groups and friendships have equally change (Asur and Huberman, 2010).

CONCEPT OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media and library services are intervening concepts. Thus, social media is a term that encompasses that internet forums, weblogs, social blogs, micro blogging, wikis, podcasts, pictures, video, rating and social bookmarking (Sanusi *et al.*, 2014). It involves the use of technology as the best medium to explore and share information resources. According to Andreas and Michael (2010) social media is a group of internet based application that builds on the ideological foundation and allows the creation and exchange of users-generated content. Thus, social media comprise online applications for social networking sites, social bookmarking and sharing tools, social citation tools, blogging and microblogging tools, virtual worlds, e-conference presentation sharing tools, audio and video tools, e-project management tools, and research and writing collaboration tools; primarily developed to foster user-centered social interaction. Social media is the relationships that exist between network of people such as library users (Qingya, Wei & Yu, 2011). It is used to describe different types of electronic communication platforms. The availability of high speed internet broadband connection with massive use of desktop computers, laptops, e-readers, tablets and smart phones enable millions of library users to actively engage in social networking, text messaging, blogging, content sharing, online learning, and much more. Social media are technologies that facilitate social interaction, collaboration and enable deliberation across stakeholders. These technologies now include blogs, wikis, media (audio, photo, video, text) sharing tools, networking platforms, and virtual worlds (Bryer and Zavatarro, 2011). There is a direct relationship between Social

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