THE ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN ENHANCING LIBRARY SERVICE DELIVERY AT IBRAHIM BADAMASI BABANGIDA UNIVERSITY, LAPAI, NIGERIA

ABUBAKAR Aliyu Ango[1]; MAHMUD Adamu[2]; MOHAMMED Saba Adamu[3]; BUHARI Yakubu[4] and [5]AMBROSE, E. Smart

[1,2,3&4]University Library Services

[1,2&4]Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida University, Lapai, Niger State, Nigeria. Email:
[3]Federal University of Technology, Minna, Niger State, Nigeria.
[5]Department of Library and Information Science,
National Open University of Nigeria, Abuja

Abstract

This research investigated the nexus between social media usage and service provision by library personnel within Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida University, Lapai, Niger State, Nigeria. The study's structure is based on four distinct objectives, each of which has related research questions. Employing a survey design, the research focuses on a target group comprising 60 library staff members, encompassing librarians and other library personnel affiliated with IBB University, Lapai. Given the limited population size, a complete enumeration approach is employed for data collection, utilising self-structured questionnaires. Data analysis entails the application of statistical techniques, including frequency counts, percentages, mean scores, and standard deviation. The findings of the study reveal that the primary library services offered encompass library education, reference services, and library orientation. Moreover, the study highlights that library personnel predominantly utilise WhatsApp and Facebook as their preferred platforms for service delivery. The research recommends the inclusion of alternative power sources, such as generators, inverters, and solar panels, to enhance the reliability of energy supply in the university library under examination. Additionally, it advocates for the adoption of various social media platforms, including blogs, YouTube, Myspace, RSS, Skype, and Flickr, to augment the efficiency of library service delivery. Furthermore, the study underscores the necessity for increased funding from governmental and institutional sources to bolster the facilities and resources essential for optimal service delivery. The outcomes of this research hold substantial implications for university policymakers, library administrators, librarians, and library personnel, aiming to enhance library service provision not only at IBB University, Lapai, but also across institutions throughout Nigeria.

Keywords: Social media use, Library services, ICT, Librarians, University library

Introduction

Library service delivery encompasses the provision of solicited and unsolicited valuable information to end-users through traditional, virtual, or combined means of communication (Ola, 2010; Komathi, 2018). Historically, Nigerian universities relied on conventional methods for library service delivery, but in the information age, there has been a substantial shift towards virtual service delivery to ensure timely information dissemination (Ola, 2010). This paradigm shift reflects the library's evolving role in the digital era, characterised by a hybrid library system that integrates both traditional and modern approaches (Ola, 2010; Komathi, 2018).

Conventional library service methods involve tangible mediums such as display boards, shelves, notice boards,

and flyers for information dissemination, while modern methods leverage digital technologies, including email, websites, and emerging tools like social media (Ola, 2010; Komathi, 2018). Librarians, as information professionals, continually adapt to serve the university community's information needs through both traditional and contemporary channels. These professionals employ diverse communication platforms, such as notice boards, emails, letters, and social media networks, to engage, collaborate, and share information with library clients (Abdullahi & Sani, 2015).

The application of information and communication technologies (ICTs) has significantly enhanced library functions, particularly service delivery, in university libraries (Ajayi, Shorunke, & Akintola, 2013). ICTs have facilitated the timely dissemination of information to library users, offering access to resources irrespective of users' physical presence within the library premises (Ajayi et al., 2013). Furthermore, ICTs have equipped libraries with essential tools such as computers, smartphones, internet access, and software, augmenting conventional service delivery methods (Ajayi et al., 2013; Ndum & Nkem, 2020). These facilities enable libraries to provide services that meet the evolving needs of their users.

Library services, whether delivered through traditional or modern methods, encompass a range of functions, including current awareness services, document delivery, and electronic resource services (Abubakar, 2011; Yusuf & Waziri, 2017). Current awareness services aim to inform library users, both physically present and virtual, about newly acquired resources, ensuring they stay updated with the library's collection (Abubakar, 2011). Additionally, librarians engage in document delivery services, delivering full-text documents and images to support research purposes (Yusuf & Waziri, 2017). Electronic resource services inform the academic community about available electronic databases for teaching, learning, and research (Abubakar, 2011).

Social media, characterised by real-time communication and information sharing, have become essential tools in today's digital landscape (Tench & Jones, 2015; Yusuf & Waziri, 2017). These platforms, including Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, and others, facilitate text, visual, audio, and video interactions in an online networking environment via the internet (Tench & Jones, 2015; Yusuf & Waziri, 2017). Social media, operating on platforms like Facebook, YouTube, MySpace, and others, have reshaped communication patterns and content sharing (Hanson et al., 2010; Yusuf & Waziri, 2017).

In the context of library service delivery, social media offer opportunities for real-time communication and interaction between libraries and their users, fostering stronger relationships (Akporhonor & Olise, 2015; Yusuf & Waziri, 2017). Leveraging social media can enhance the speed and efficiency of library services (Akporhonor & Olise, 2015). Furthermore, it encourages feedback and real-time online engagement (Mishra, 2008), ultimately saving users time, money, and travel expenses (Aras & Colaklar, 2015; Yusuf & Waziri, 2017).

In light of these considerations, this study explores the use of social media as a correlate of service delivery by library staff at Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida University, Lapai, Nigeria, with the aim of understanding how these platforms can further enhance library services in the digital age.

Statement of the Problem

This study focuses on tertiary public libraries that play a crucial role in supporting teaching, research, and learning by providing up-to-date information. Modern library services aim to deliver timely and high-quality information, with efficient ICT service delivery significantly impacting education and research. Despite substantial investments in Nigerian university libraries, both traditional and virtual library usage have declined. This decline is attributed to institutional factors and advancements in ICT, particularly the rise of social media. Factors like library policy, infrastructure, working conditions, ICT skills, and funding are recognised as potential contributors to library service delivery challenges.

The study also explores the impact of social media on information service delivery, highlighting platforms like Facebook, Twitter, blogs, WhatsApp, YouTube, Flickr, and Interest that enable librarians and users to share content and engage in real-time conversations. However, it notes that most Nigerian university libraries have yet to fully leverage social media for improved service delivery. Additionally, the research emphasises the importance of considering institutional variables in enhancing information service delivery, as neglecting these factors could jeopardise library survival and stakeholders' returns on investment. The primary objective of the study is to assess how social media usage influences service delivery among librarians at IBB University Lapai.

Objectives

i. Identify the types of library services delivered to users among librarians in universities in IBBU, Lapai

ii. Ascertain the frequency of library service delivery among librarians in universities

iii. Determine the types of social media used for service delivery by librarians

iv. Identify the problems to effective service delivery among librarians

Research Question

i. What are the types of library service rendered to users by librarians in universities in IBBU, Lapai?

ii. What is the frequency of service delivery by librarians in universities?

iii. What are the types of social media used for service delivery in universities?

iv. What are the problems to effecting service delivery in universities?

Review of the related literature

Understanding the diverse needs of library users is paramount for librarians, as it significantly contributes to effective communication and the efficient delivery of services to a wide spectrum of users, including staff, students, and researchers (Oyeniran & Olajide, 2015). Aina (2014) delineates an array of library services, encompassing traditional offerings like library notices, Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) access, loans, reservations, registration, information dissemination, current awareness, and reference services. Additionally, libraries have expanded their services to include library orientation, information literacy programmes, electronic resources, and outreach initiatives. Outreach services, in particular, entail extending assistance to lecturers, students, and researchers beyond the university's confines.

The integration of information and communication technologies (ICTs) into

library services has been a transformative force. Husain and Nazim (2015) conducted a study in Indian libraries, highlighting the use of ICTs for public access catalogues, electronic resources, physical and web-based reference services, online tutorials, web portals, automatic mailing alerts, and addressing frequently asked questions.

Research by Eze and Uzoigwe (2013) in Nigeria revealed a rich tapestry of services rendered to library users, including user education, orientation, reference, internet access, bibliographic support, electronic databases, reprographic services, interlibrary loans, and exhibitions. Ishola (2014) added to this by listing all the different services that university libraries in Nigeria provide. These include registration, translation, interlibrary loans, bibliographic support, abstract and indexing, documentation, selective information dissemination, current awareness, online reference, publishing, internet access, TV, CD-ROM services, reprographics, consulting, email, printing, binding, and renting out facilities. These services are delivered through conventional, virtual, or hybrid methods, adapting to the evolving needs of users.

Traditional means of communication, such as notice boards, flyers, paper advertisements, and bookshops, remain integral to librarians' efforts in delivering services (Mbofung & Popoola, 2014). Aharony and Bronstein (2014) observed the significant role of librarians in providing information literacy programmes to students and faculty, acknowledging the relevance of social media in enhancing these programmes.

In a study by Luo (2015) on reference services in a Ghanaian university library, it was found that reference services were offered with high standards of quality. However, the study suggested that librarians should invest more effort in identifying and fulfilling users' information needs. Nnadozie (2016) investigated information service provision to lecturers in Nigerian tertiary institutions, highlighting services like document delivery, document printing, data processing, electronic resource access, email, internet call services, and institutional repository services.

Mabawonku (2017) contends that technology plays a pivotal role in library service delivery, with libraries leveraging computers, mobile applications, and social media platforms to disseminate information seamlessly, regardless of users' locations. Musangi (2015) emphasises the adoption of emerging technologies such as Flickr, YouTube, Facebook, and RSS feeds in academic libraries, underscoring the importance of investment in these technologies to complement traditional service provision.

Akporhonor and Olise (2015) examined social media usage among librarians in Nigeria and found that different platforms had varying degrees of adoption. Quadri and Idowu's study (2016) in southwestern Nigeria found high awareness and usage of social media tools such as Facebook and Google+, especially for services like current awareness and reference.

Hamad, Tbaishat, and Al-Fadel (2017) investigated the role of social networks in enhancing library services at Jordanian and Al-Balgaa's Applied Universities. While Facebook was highly utilised, the study also highlighted that librarians' exploration of social media for library service delivery was limited, with a preference for real-time virtual communication among colleagues.

Huang, Chu, and Chen (2015) examined librarians' use of social media for interactions with users in English- and Chinese-speaking countries.

Findings indicated the use of Facebook, Twitter, and Chinese Weibo for disseminating library event announcements and showcasing online resources.

Smeaton and Davis (2014) conducted a survey in Australian academic libraries, demonstrating that Facebook, YouTube, Flickr, Twitter, Pinterest, and blogs were frequently used social media tools. These libraries tailored their messages, emphasising the advantages of using social media and its positive impact on library service delivery. In contrast, Bhardwaj's study (2014) on the application of social media by librarians revealed that social media was predominantly used for personal engagements and professional development.

Akporhonor and Endouware (2016) investigated the challenges faced by university librarians in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria when using social media tools. Among the obstacles encountered were library policies, network issues, and privacy concerns. However, access to a steady power supply facilitated the application of social media for library resources and services.

Singh and Sarmah (2015) identified factors like copyright, authenticity, and institutional concerns as impediments to the optimal use of social media. Similarly, Quadri and Idowu (2016) found challenges such as poor power supply, inadequate internet connectivity, a lack of infrastructure, and technical constraints hindering social media's effective application for disseminating library services in federal universities.

Mommoh and Saka's study (2016) revealed that the lack of modern training facilities and insufficient funds for librarian training posed significant challenges in acquiring ICT skills. Other hindrances included a lack of training opportunities and librarians' attitudes towards ICT training.

Bwalya (2014) examined virtual library services in Zambia and identified poor internet connections and low bandwidth as major constraints. Furthermore, Abdelraheem and Ahmed (2015) highlighted infrastructural limitations, including slow internet connections and the absence of smartphones, as significant inhibitors to the use of social media in Sudanese universities. Lack of training, long hours spent teaching, insufficient rewards for faculty members, and insufficient technical support all contributed to these difficulties.

The literature underscores the dynamic landscape of library services, which have evolved from traditional methods to incorporate emerging technologies and social media. While technology offers vast potential, librarians must navigate challenges related to infrastructure, policy, and training to harness its full benefits in delivering efficient and user-centric services.

Methodology

The study adopted a survey research design. The population of the study is 60 library staff. It is made up of librarians and library staff in the university libraries at IBB University, Lapai, Niger State, Nigeria. All the library staff (60) at the university will participate in the study because the population is small and manageable. The research instrument that was used for this study is a self-designed questionnaire. The data collected was analysed using descriptive statistics such as frequency counts, percentages, mean, and standard deviation for research questions. The collected data was analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23. The criterion mean score of less than 2.50 was regarded as negative; one above 2.5 was regarded as positive.

Results and Discussion

1. What are the types of library service rendered to users by librarians in universities in IBBU, Lapai?

Library Service Delivered	Number	Percentage (%)
Library registration	57	94.8
Reference service	51	85.6
Notification of new library resources arrivals	48	79.4
Library orientation	45	75.8
Selective dissemination of information (SDI)	24	40.3
Book services	48	80.8
Library education	45	75.0
Library materials recommendation	30	50.2
Charging and discharging of library materials	57	95.5

Table 1, shows the library service delivered by library staff as charging and discharging of library materials 57(95.5), library registration 57(94.8), reference service 51(85.6), book services 48(80.8), notification of new library resources arrivals 48(79.4), library orientation 45(75.8), library education 45(75.0), library materials recommendation 30(50.2) and selective dissemination of information (SDI) 24(40.3). Overall, the data show that a sizable portion of respondents used a variety of library services, with "Charging and Discharging of Library Materials" being the most frequently used service, followed by "Library Registration." This suggests a positive engagement with library resources and services among the respondents.

2. What is the frequency of service delivery by librarians in universities?

Items	Mean	STD
Library registration	3.51	0.45
Reference service	3.53	0.45
Notification of new library resources arrivals	2.51	0.72
Library orientation	3.20	0.62
Selective dissemination of information (SDI)	2.30	0.70
Book services	3.25	0..63
Library education	2.94	0.73
Library materials recommendation	2.55	0.71
Charging and discharging of library materials	3.85	0.42
Aggregated mean	3.07	0.60

From Table 2 the library staff' responses showed that out of the nine items listed for the library staff to respond on the frequency of service delivery, it showed that eight yielded high mean scores of 3.85; SD=.42 (item 9), 3.53; SD=.45 (item 2), 3.51; SD=.45 (item 1), 3.25; SD=.63 (item 6), 3.20; SD=.62 (item 4), 2.94; SD=.73 (item 7), 2.55; SD=.71 (item 8) and 2.51; SD=.72 (item 3). These eight items focused on: charging and discharging of library materials, reference service, library registration, book services, library orientation, library education, library materials recommendation and notification of new library resources arrivals. All these items had high mean scores which were above the 2.5 mark on the 4 point Likert scale. However, one item had low mean score of 2.30; SD=.70 respectively. This is item 5: Selective dissemination of information (SDI).

On the whole, the aggregated mean score of 3.07 is high indicating that library staff frequency of service delivery is high adequate.

3. What are the types of social media used for service delivery in universities?

SOCIAL MEDIA USE	Mean	STD
Facebook	3.50	0.45
WhatsApp	3.53	0.47
Blog	1.95	0.83
YouTube	2.52	0.72
Skype	2.35	0.74
Myspace	1.82	0.79
Flickr	1.80	0.80
LinkedIn	2.50	0.76
Google	3.75	0.41
Instagram	1.86	0.80
Twitter	1.89	0.82

The table shows that Facebook, WhatsApp, YouTube, Skype, and LinkedIn are moderately used social media platforms, with relatively consistent patterns of usage among respondents. Google stands out as the most frequently used platform, while blogging platforms (Blog, Myspace, Flickr, Instagram, and Twitter) are used minimally and exhibit significant variability in usage among respondents.

4. What are the problems to effecting service delivery in universities?

Problems	Mean	STD
Erratic power supply	3.98	1.07
Slow speed of Internet connection	3.89	1.08
Inadequate computers	3.85	1.05
Inadequate ICT skills	3.75	1.18
Technological obsoleteness	3.65	1.15
Lack of conducive environment	3.80	1.06
Social media privacy issue	3.95	1.04
Lack of written policy	3.90	1.02
Inadequate funding	3.95	1.03
Technophobia	3.71	1.19

Table 4 show that respondents consider factors such as erratic power supply, slow Internet speed, inadequate computers, inadequate ICT skills, social media privacy issues, and the lack of a written policy as significant barriers to their social media use. These factors have relatively high mean scores. While respondents perceive other factors like technological obsoleteness, lack of a conducive environment, inadequate funding, and technophobia as challenges, their perceptions exhibit more variability, as indicated by higher standard deviations.

Discussion

The study indicates that librarians at IBB University, Lapai, actively provide a range of services to address users' information needs. More than fifty percent of respondents engage in services like charging and discharging materials, library registration, selective dissemination of information (SDI), reference services, and more. These findings align with the significance of reference services and information literacy programmes emphasised in prior research by Smeaton and Davis (2014) in Australia and Nigeria. Knepp, Eke, and Ekwelem (2014) found similar results, indicating that over half of Nigerian librarians offer reference services to users. Additionally, the study's findings correspond with previous research on services like reference, library orientation, and update notifications provided by librarians in universities across Nigeria. Husain and Nazim (2015) also noted various library services offered by librarians in university libraries in India and Nigeria, such as outreach, public access catalogues, and online tutorials.

The study findings indicate that library services at IBB University are delivered on a regular basis. Among these services, reference services stand out as the most frequently provided, with more than half of the respondents stating that they offer this service daily.

Additionally, library registration and charging/discharging of materials are also delivered very regularly, highlighting their importance in facilitating users' access to library resources. On the other hand, librarians don't typically offer services like translation and photo services. These findings are consistent with existing research in the field of library services. Adetimirin and Agboluaje (2011) reported that library services in Nigerian universities are provided on a daily, weekly, and monthly basis, reinforcing the idea that regular service delivery is a common practice. Luo's study (2015), conducted at an African university, found that reference services were delivered regularly, in line with the observed high frequency of reference services in this study. Moreover, Madhusudhan and Nagabhushanam (2012) noted in their research that document delivery, current awareness, reference, and selective dissemination of information services were frequently provided in Indian universities, providing further support for the regularity of library services.

The study findings indicate that librarians at IBBU Lapai actively employ various social media platforms to enhance library service delivery. A notable proportion of respondents acknowledged the utilisation of social media for this purpose, with WhatsApp and Facebook emerging as the most commonly used platforms. These social media tools were leveraged for services such as recommending library materials, providing reference assistance, and promptly updating users on new library resources, underscoring their role in improving service delivery. These findings are in line with previous research by Singh and Sarmah (2015), which also demonstrated a significant use of social media by librarians for service delivery. Additionally, the study aligns

with Deng and Zhang's research (2015) in China, affirming the adoption of social media platforms, particularly for reference services. The results further support the findings of Khan and Ansari (2014) in India, Moise and Cruceru (2014) in Romania, and Kalbande's study, all of which emphasised the extensive use of Facebook for library service delivery within their respective university contexts.

The study uncovered several critical challenges affecting effective library service delivery at IBBU Lapai. These challenges encompassed inadequate funding, a lack of familiarity with library policies, and outdated ICT resources. Notably, inadequate funding emerged as a prominent and pervasive obstacle. This observation is consistent with the findings of other scholars in Nigeria, including Ishola (2014) and Ferdinand et al. (2016), who similarly pointed out that insufficient financial support hindered the acquisition of essential electronic equipment, such as computers, desktops, printers, servers, and Internet infrastructure. Comparable funding inadequacies have also been documented in various international contexts, as exemplified by Naik's (2013) research in both Nigerian and Indian university libraries.

Conclusion

Social media use by library workers may improve or hinder service. If service delivery isn't sufficiently supported, library and information resources and facilities will be underutilised. Inefficient library service delivery owing to low social media usage might reduce patronage. Social media is vital for IBB University, Lapai librarians' service delivery. Low usage of social media by librarians and library personnel might contribute to users' lack of knowledge of available services and real-

time communication, which could enhance service delivery to many users at once. Social media helped offer library services. IBB University, Lapai library staff's use of social media predicts service delivery. This research will help policymakers, library administration, and librarians improve library service in Nigerian universities.

Recommendations

i. The university library should provide alternative power sources such as generators, inverters, and solar panels to ensure a stable supply of electricity

ii. Social media platforms should be deployed, such as blogs, YouTube, Myspace, RSS, Skype, and Flickr, to optimise library service delivery.

iii. Increase funding from the government and parent institutions to enhance facilities and resources for optimal service delivery

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