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Social Networking Sites: Changing Roles, Skills and Use by Librarians in Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria.

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Social Networking Sites: Changing Roles, Skills and Use by Librarians in Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria.

Abstract

The purpose of the study is to investigate the extent to which librarians use social networking sites (SNSs) and the level of skills possessed by librarians to effectively use these tools. A questionnaire was used to collect data on the skills and use of social networking sites by librarians in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. The questionnaire was developed using SurveyMonkey and administered using an online method. The study revealed that Facebook, WhatsApp, LinkedIn, Twitter, Skype and YouTube are the most popular SNSs used by the Librarians. Other social networking sites such as 'Nigerian Library Association (NLA) online forum' and 'Research gate' were also mentioned by the librarians. The study also revealed that marketing library services, sharing information about the library resources, and news about the library were indicated as the top reasons for using the SNSs by librarians in Nigeria. Librarians in Nigeria rated their skills such as interacting with friends and relatives, searching and navigating different SNSs, applying information ethically, and ability to evaluate information on SNSs to be higher than others. The librarians mentioned power failure, bad network/low bandwidth, lack of time and lack of interest by some librarians as the major challenges in using SNSs in Nigeria. This study offers insights for academic libraries to make informed decisions in applying social networking tools.

Introduction

Social networking sites (SNSs) have grown astoundingly over the past few years. According to social media statistics, there are over 1.15 Billion Facebook users compared to 700 million in 2011, over 500 million Twitter users compared to 250 million in 2011; over 238 million LinkedIn users compared to 115 million in 2011; and there are over 500 million Google plus users compared to 25 million users in 2011 (Digital Insight, 2013). Libraries of all types including academic libraries around the world are moving towards using social networking sites such as: Blogs, Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, MySpace, Google plus, Instragram, Maship, LinkedIn, Wikis and a host of others. Presently, so many librarians are now using

social media to fulfill a variety of objectives, with most of them focused on promotion of library services and resources. Social media is also increasingly being seen as a collection management tool, offering flexible ways to present resources. For example, YouTube for video delivery and is categorized as Folksonomies. Outreach is also seen as important – for example, helping librarians increase their visibility and connections within the broader library community and also for assisting in the promotion of the work of the faculty… (Taylor and Francis Group, 2014).

In today's social networking era, millions of people are turning to the internet to keep in touch with their friends, family and colleagues. Social networking tools make staying involved quicker, easier and more fun than ever before. These SNSs have millions of users, with ever increasing number of users every day. Farkas (2007a) explained how the social web has led to the birth of what is known as the read/write web or Web 2.0. The author also introduced the term "social software", which refers to any software that lets people have a two-way conversation. She explained that many users spend almost all the time online to visit SNS due to the advantages of those sites, which include:

> ➢ allowing people to communicate and build community online;
> ➢ facilitating syndication by sharing and reusing; and
> ➢ capitalizing the knowledge of others and helping people learn easily.

As the social networking sites become more widespread in the information world, its adoption in the library becomes both interesting and challenging as librarians role will change to satisfying their online community. This study therefore explores the extent to which librarians in tertiary institutions (Universities, Colleges of Education, and Polytechnics) in Nigeria use SNSs. In other to achieve this objective, the researchers set the following research questions to guide the study.

Research Questions

1. Which among the existing social networking sites librarians have account with?
2. For what purposes do the librarians use the social networking sites?
3. To what extent will the librarians rate their level of skills to use SNSs?

4.   Through what means do the librarians acquired the skills?
5.   What are some of the challenges of using SNSs.

Literature Review

Librarians and Social Networking Sites

Presently, for libraries to go where their patrons are hanging – out, they have started utilizing newer communication channels like blogs, wikis, RSS feeds and now SNSs to extend their reach. Social networking tools enable people to connect, collaborate and form virtual communities via the internet. Social networking sites are those that provide opportunities to interact, they allow visitors to send e-mail, post comments build web content and/or take part in live chats (YALSA, 2011). There are a number of ways that libraries can use social networking tools (5 Minute Guide: SNSs, 2014) for strengthening their services so that they can make the users feel benefited. Libraries can:

> ➢ use these social networking tools to mobilize their services;
> ➢ create fan clubs, so that the popularity of the library can be measured over time;
> ➢ facilitate access to librarians and the library's resources;
> ➢ advertise special programs and events;
> ➢ highlight parts of the collection, such as new items, to a specific group;
> ➢ make users aware of activities relevant to them and the latest library developments so that users can feel excitement and want to visit the library; and
> ➢ prove that libraries are not afraid to use cutting-edge technology.

Librarians are responding to the popularity of social networking sites and their expanding role in the creation, use and sharing of information by engaging them as a central medium for interacting with library patrons and providing services to meet their information needs.

Uses of Social Media for Library Services

In Nigeria, the use of social media is increasing day-by-day. According to the statistics of 2015, 67 million of the population are internet users, out of which 6.6 million are Facebook users (Internet World Stats, 2015). In other words, librarians and students are among the 6.6 million Facebook users in Nigeria. For example, the study by Baro, Idiodi and Godfrey (2013) revealed that the most frequently used Web 2.0 tool is Facebook. It was used by 46.6% of the librarians in Nigeria. The authors added that 66.5% of the librarians in university libraries in Nigeria use Web 2.0 tools like the Facebook mostly for online reference services. Adeleke and Habila (2012) reported that librarians in Nigeria have fully embraced the benefits and use of weblogs for library services and operations. The researchers attributed this to be partly due to the state of internet penetration and use in Nigeria. In the same vein, Ofili and Emwanta (2014) studied Facebook use in John Harris Library, Benin, Nigeria. The study based on the perceptual experiences of the John Harris Library staff that had Facebook accounts and took part in the library's Facebook group activities. The findings show that connecting with colleagues and students ranked highest as all the respondents engaged in this. The researchers concluded that the use of Facebook proved to be a professional tool for marketing the library services, communication across staff and patrons, and rendering information services.

Khan and Bhatti (2012) collected data on application of social media in marketing of library and information services in Pakistan from librarians and LIS school academics working at Bahauddin Zakariya University of Multan and the Islamia University of Bahamalpur. The study revealed that respondents' attitude was positive. That is, the majority agreed that the use of social media is important to capture the attention of online users and help in distance learning and knowledge sharing. There are number of libraries that used Wikis, Flickr, or Blogs for publishing historical photos and ask people to identify people, places, or events pictured. Different libraries use Wikis for content creation and to create a collaborative relation between library and the community (Convertive, 2011). U.S libraries of all types are increasingly using social media tools and Web 2.0 applications to connect with library users and to make library programs and services accessible (ALA, 2001). The National Library of Australia (NLA) uses a

variety of social media for notifying news, relevant items from collection and library events. Facebook is used by the library to inform the library users about major events, activities and recent acquisitions through posting photos, videos and links to resources about the library. The library uses YouTube for sharing videos of many of the events held at the library (NLA, 2010).

Social media has the potential to facilitate much closer relationship between libraries and their patrons. Social media will likely play an increasingly important role in library service provision and outreach in the future (Taylor and Francis Group, 2014). Dickson and Holley (2010) noted that social networking can be an effective method of student outreach in academic libraries if libraries take care to respect students' privacy and to provide equal coverage for all subject areas. The study by Bhatt and Kumar (2014) revealed that the majority (94.0%) of the students use SNSs to stay in touch with their friends. The study also revealed that the majority (66.4%) of the students feel that librarians should connect with them through SNSs.

A 2008 EDUCAUSE Center for Applied Research (ECAR)'s study (Salamay, Caruso and Nelson, 2008) found that 85.2% of college undergraduate use one or more SNSs, and of these, more than 89% use Facebook. It has long been a goal of university libraries and higher education in general, to "go to the students", or to offer resources and services in the media commonly used by students. Sachs, Eckel and Langan, (2011) reported that in January 2009, librarians at Western Michigan University decided to create a library presence on social networking sites. The librarians had three goals for the sites (1) to promote and market library resources and services; (2) to offer reference help; and (3) to provide asynchronous instruction tips on research concepts. According to the researchers, "by January 2011, the Waldo Library Facebook profile had over 1500 friends including current and former students, faculty, staff community members, and other interested individuals around the world. According to Jain (2013) "Flickr is an excellent marketing tool librarians can use it to market general library services to their users" (p.7).

Purpose of Using Social Media by Librarians

Social media is being used world-wide for diverse purposes in libraries: marketing, branding, building customer relationships, reference services, quick dissemination of news e.t.c.

The table below illustrates some of the ways social media tools are being used by librarians

Social Media	Uses
Twitter	• Distribute library news and information. • Provide customer service. • Build connections with researchers. • Build connections with other librarians and institutions.
Facebook	• Distribute library news and information. • More social and less formal than Twitter-share photographs and run competitions. • Arrange events including tracking RSVPs and sending event updates • Engagement with students. • Promote general library collections, digital and archive special collections and information literacy. • Set up of online repositories for students to pin researched references as part of collaborative group work. • Display book titles to save time, browsing and promote new titles. • Provide an arena for students and course leaders to pin reviewed and recommended reading for a particular topic. • Develop communities with other online libraries.
YouTube	• Streaming film collections • To video teaching information literacy skills and how to use library services and resources.

Adopted from Taylor and Francis Group, (2014).

The study by Muneja and Abungu (2012) revealed on the purpose of using the Web 2.0 tools that sharing of resources is the main purpose of using Web 2.0 in most libraries (14: 77.8%), scholarly communication and promotion of library services were both rated 12 (66.7%) followed by news and information at 10 (55.6%). Connell (2009) studied freshmen feelings about librarians using Facebook and MySpace as outreach tools at Valparaison University. The study revealed that most (57.7%) of the respondents would accept library contact through these web sites, but a substantial minority responded negatively to the idea. The article concluded that library and librarian profiles on social networking web sites would be welcomed by many students and should strongly be considered. Pennsylvania State University created a Facebook page and promoted it in library instruction sessions. While tracking reference questions received in one semester they learned that almost 29% of questions were received through Facebook, with all of them

from undergraduate students (Mack, et al, 2007). Due to this success, they recommended that academic librarians seriously consider making use of Facebook. The study by Taylor and Francis Group, (2014) reported that most librarians feel strongly positive about the potential for social media to help increase engagement between users and library staff and services. Social media is also seen as an effective outreach tool, helping librarians promote the work of their faculty and connect more deeply with the broader library community (Taylor and Francis Group, 2014).

Challenges Associated with Using SNSs

The study by Kwanya, Stilwell and Underwood (2012) revealed that libraries in Kenya face challenges such as inadequate ICT infrastructure; unstable bandwidth; lack of technical skills amongst the librarians and library users to make the best use of the tools; conservative culture and natural lag in adopting new technology; ignorance or lack of appreciation of the potential of Web 2.0 tools especially amongst the older users; lack of supportive policies, strategies and plans; and inadequate financial resources. The study by Ezeani and Igwesi (2012) identified the challenges faced by Nigerian librarians in the use of social media as: lack of awareness of social media, lack of maintenance culture, lack of trained staff, lack of government intervention; bandwidth problem, technophobia, and unreliable power supply and copyright issues.

Major Social Networking Sites Used by Librarians

Although MySpace was originally the most popular social networking site, past estimates have placed Facebook with an 85% market share among college students (Mathews, 2007). As a result of its strong user base among college students, Facebook appears to be the most logical social networking website to be used by an academic library. Several studies have reported the use of Facebook in academic libraries. The most common among them is the use of Facebook to market the library with a library fan page. Libraries advertise hours, location and web site information using Facebook (Farkas, 2007a; and Mathews, 2007). Using Facebook applications, some academic libraries embed the library catalog to allow students to access the contents of the library catalog without actually visiting the library's web site (Farkas, 2007a).

A recent study by Gauntner-Witte (2014) revealed that libraries are primarily using Twitter and Facebook to market the library with content generated to promote library news and information. Studies on social media tools have shown that Facebook and Twitter are the most commonly used social media tools in academic libraries (Gauntner-Witte, 2014; Baro, Idiodi and Godfrey, 2013; Chu & Du, 2013; Taylor and Fancis, 2014). For example, Chu & Du (2013) studied the use of social networking tools in academic libraries in Hong Kong, the extent of their use and library staff's perceptions on their usefulness and challenges. The study revealed that most library staff had positive opinions on the usefulness of social networking tools, but hesitancy among library staff and limited participation of users (i.e students) were barriers to usage. Facebook and Twitter were found to be the most popular social networking sites used by the library staff.

Park (2010) studied the differences among university students and faculties in their perception and use of social networking. He found that undergraduate students regard SNSs as an entertainment feature, and most faculty members were not active users of this technology. He suggested making social networking site-based services tailored to the students and the benefits emphasized to them in other to attract them to get involved in these activities. The study by Taylor and Francis Group (2014) revealed that 61% of libraries have been using social media for three years or more, 30% post to social media daily, Facebook is the most popular channel, with 58% of librarians using it regularly; and 75% of libraries schedule posts and hoc, with no social media policy or plan in place.

Muneja and Abungu (2012) studied application of Web 2.0 tools in delivering library services in Tanzania. The study revealed that Facebook was the highest used tool with 17 (94.4%) respondents, Twitter and weblogs were both at 12 (66.7%) followed by Google docs 9 (50%) respondents. The researchers also found that Facebook was the most frequently used tool as 15 out of 18 used it on daily basis in Tanzania. Similarly, Kwanya, Stilwell, and Underwood (2012) studied the application of Web 2.0 tools by libraries in Kenya, and found that the most popular Web 2.0 tool in Kenya's libraries is Facebook which is followed by Twitter.

Blogs encourage user interaction through their comment feature, which allows students to provide feedback regarding the information provided and the library itself. Librarians can post news about the library as well as events occurring at the

library (Dickson and Holley, 2010). In using Twitter, libraries can post hour changes, events, new resources available, search tips, links to the library web sites, responses to student comments and news affecting students. Wan (2011) studied how academic libraries reach users on Facebook. The study revealed that majority (90.4%) of Association of Research Libraries (ARL) academic libraries have launched Facebook pages to reach users. The researcher concluded that, as a free and easy-to-maintain social networking tool, Facebook has great potential for library outreach.

Riza-Ayu and Abrizah (2011) states that prompt responses to queries via social media are important to ensure continued use of that service. The authors found that libraries that updated their status daily had the highest user engagement (likes and follows). With the exponential growth of the use of social media such as the Facebook, MySpace; Twitter, YouTube, it became inevitable that librarians must learn the use of these tools to be able to keep their ever growing and sophisticated patrons (Ezeani and Igwesi, 2012). The social media have become a means for serving our patrons in a more specialized, interactive and value added way without incurring undue expenses. Social networking is a new way of providing library services through new internet technologies, with emphasis on "User-centered", two-way interaction and communication of information. According to Ezeani and Igwesi (2012, p.2) "with new networking tools, information can now flow in a multi-faceted dimension (library to user, user to library, library to library, user to user), rather than the one way stereotype form of library to user."

Social networking sites allow librarians to adopt a new role by placing themselves into a social realm with users. By reading blogs, tweets, group postings and message boards, the librarian becomes an active participant, who is able to anticipant and advice patrons as needs arise. Ezeani and Eke (2011) states that the most applicable Web 2.0 technologies for library services is the social networking tools - where librarians can interact with their users to study their needs and give a feedback; photo sharing where archival pictures can be posted to users or uploaded on the library websites.

Methodology

The study covered librarians working in libraries of tertiary institutions (Universities, Colleges of Education, and Polytechnics) in Nigeria. Quantitative and qualitative research methods were used for the study. The collection of data was through an online questionnaire. A questionnaire developed using SurveyMonkey software was used for data collection. Questions 1-4 on the questionnaire asked respondent's biodata, such as name of institution, staff designation, academic qualification, and gender. While, questions 5-9 asked areas concerning uses of SNSs by librarians.

To respond to the short online questionnaire, the link to the questionnaire https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/298BJJB was forwarded to the Nigerian Library Association (NLA) online forum. In this forum, nearly all librarians both practicing and lecturing with active e-mail address register to be a member of the forum. Members were informed that the questionnaire was for librarians practicing in libraries in tertiary institutions in Nigeria not for librarians lecturing in library schools. To raise the response rate, members were reminded severally through e-mail to the online forum. Data collection started in November 2015 and ended March 2016 to allow those on annual leave to have the opportunity to respond. In all, 92 librarians working in tertiary institutions responded to the online survey.

Data collected from the 92 respondents was used for analysis. The qualitative data collected were listed by topics and then the responses were finally grouped into similar themes for analysis. In some of the questions, respondents were asked to respond to as many items as applicable. Results presented in tables and charts.

Data Analysis

The biographical data shows that, the librarians who responded to the survey work in different tertiary institution's libraries (Universities, Polytechnics, and Colleges of Education) in Nigeria and range from Assistant Librarians to the rank of University Librarian. Out of the 92 respondents, 70 hold masters degree, 8 hold Ph.D and another 8 bachelor degrees while 4 respondents skipped that item. Females dominated the survey with 48 respondents while males with 44 respondents (Tables I-III).

Table I: Staff Designation/Status

Staff status	Number	Percentage
University Librarian	8	8.7 %
Deputy University Librarian	2	2.2 %
College Librarian	6	6.5 %
Deputy College Librarian	4	3.4 %
Principal Librarian	10	10.9 %
Senior Librarian	10	10.9 %
Librarian I	12	13.0 %
Librarian II	30	32.6 %
Assistant Librarian	10	10.9 %
Total	92	100 %

Table II: Academic Qualification of Staff

Staff status	Number	Percentage
Ph.D	8	8.7%
M.Sc	70	76.1%
BLS/BLis	8	8.7 %
OND/HND	2	2.2%
Skipped/Not responded	4	4.3%
Total	92	100 %

Table III: Gender Distribution of Respondents

Gender	Number	Percentage
Male	44	47.8%
Female	48	52.2%
Total	92	100 %

Discussion of Findings

Question 5 asked respondents to indicate the SNSs that they have active account with. Out of the SNSs, the majority (88:95.7%) of the respondents indicated having account with Facebook, followed by WhatsApp (78: 84.8%) and LinkedIn (76: 82.6%). Others are: Twitter (66: 71.7%), Skype (61: 66.3%) and YouTube (53: 57.6%). This shows that Facebook, WhatsApp, LinkedIn, Twitter, Skype and

YouTube seem to be the most popular SNSs used by the Librarians (Figure 1). Many libraries adopt social networking as services created to connect with patrons and colleagues. For example, librarians in Nigeria have started connecting with each other via the popular WhatsApp in a group network to deliver messages on up-coming conference/workshop, job opportunities, and other current information concerning the profession.

The findings indicate that librarians have become involved in the new world of communication and that it is changing their interactions with colleagues within and outside their own libraries. It is allowing people to keep in closer contact with former colleagues, and to sustain relationships with colleagues from other libraries, who in the past may have only been accessible during conferences or workshops.

Correlation of gender with social networking sites librarians have account with shows that more females than the males indicated having account with the following: Facebook, WhatsApp, LinkedIn, Twitter, Skype, and YouTube (Table IV). This finding on gender differences on use of SNSs agrees with the findings of earlier studies by Aharony (2013); Hargittai (2007); Thelmall (2008); and Hargittai and Hsieh (2010).

In the others "please specify" option, Librarians mentioned also using the 'Nigerian Library Association (NLA) online forum' and 'Researchgate' as some other social networking sites used by them. This findings agrees with Khan and Bhatti (2012)'s study in Pakistan which recommended that online news groups/forums, video sharing (YouTube), Social Networking (Facebook, MySpace), Wikis, professional networking and Blogging are good venues for marketing different library services. These tools if actively used are good means of spreading news and service alert, to provide quick updates to online users and to publish library news and press releases among online users.

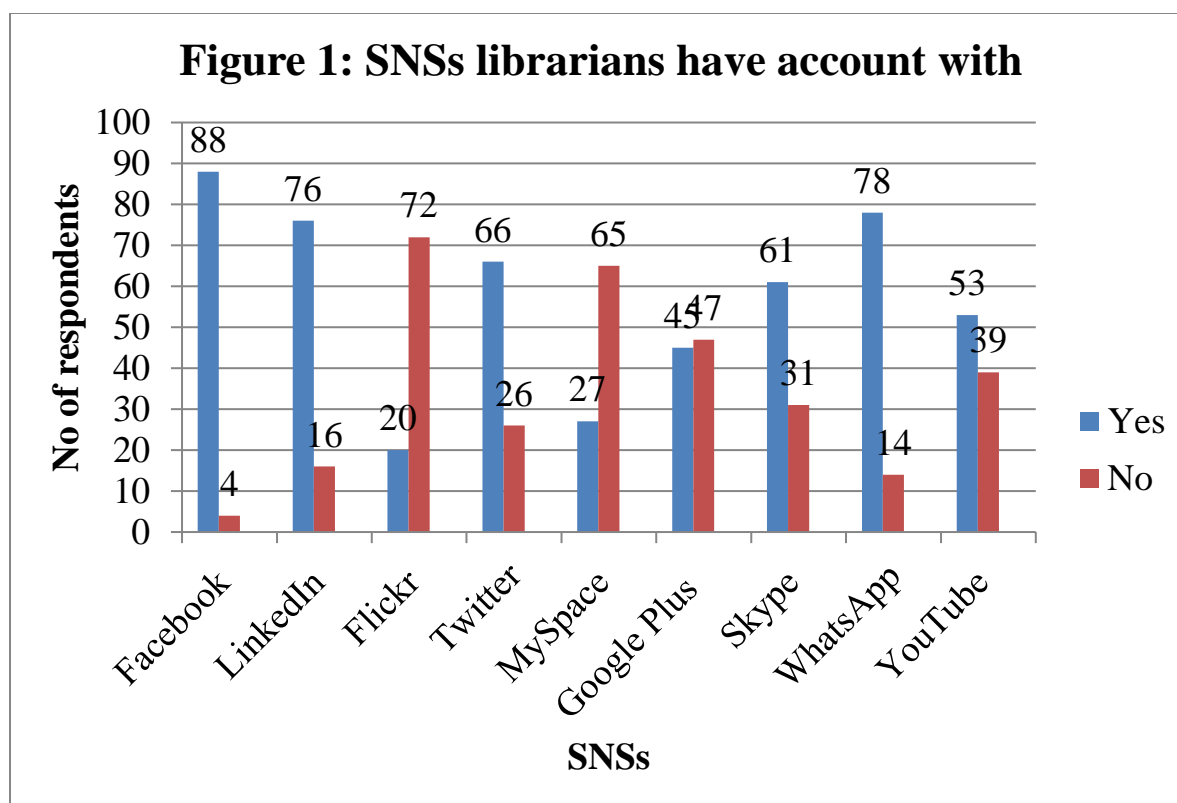*Figure 1: Number of SNSs Librarians have Account with*

Figure 1: SNSs librarians have account with

Table IV: A Correlation of Gender with SNSs Librarians have Account with

| SNSs	Male	Female	Total
Facebook	42 (47.7%)	46 (52.3%)	88
WhatsApp	36 (46.2%)	42 (53.8%)	78
LinkedIn	36 (47.4%)	40 (52.6%)	76
Twitter	24 (36.4%)	42 (63.6%)	66
Skype	22 (36.1%)	39 (63.9%)	61
Youtube	21 (39.6%)	32 (60.4%)	53
Total	44	48	92

Purposes for which Librarians Use the SNSs

Question 6 asked respondents to indicate their purpose of using the SNSs. Out of the 92 respondents, 73 (79.3%) indicated using them to market library services, closely followed by 72 (78.3%) using them to share information about the library resources, 61 (66.3%) indicated using them to share news about the library, and 58 (63%) indicated using the SNS to provide link to library's home page (see details in Figure 2). The findings shows that marketing library services, sharing

information about the library resources, and news about the library are the top reasons librarians in Nigeria use the SNSs.

In the "others please specify" option, librarians in Nigeria mentioned using the SNSs like the 'NLA online forum' to receive 'information about workshops/conferences', and using other social networking sites for 'self-skill development', and used for 'connecting with friends and relatives'. The findings revealed that social networking can help librarians network with people they may otherwise have no contact with and to create a reputation for their expertise, For example, as librarians endorse other colleagues for areas of expertise in social networking sites like LinkedIn, helps to maintain closer relationships with colleagues. Librarians using LinkedIn helps them to relate personally to colleagues in new ways and allow them to find colleagues with similar interests that they might not have known about before. If actively used SNSs are effective means of disseminating information such as invitation to attend up-coming conference/workshop, job vacancies for librarians, news about new appointments among librarians, call for papers, request for vital information to be provided by colleagues through the social network, and many other information.

Librarians in Nigerian tertiary institutions are gradually utilizing these tools to offer more proactive and more value added services to meet the ever changing needs of our patrons. This finding support the findings of Ezeani and Igwesi (2012) which revealed that social networking sites provide important opportunities to libraries. Libraries can use these platforms for marketing library and information services. Gallardo (2013) suggests best practices for libraries Facebook posts to include the following: be casual and conversational, use images, post consistently, post the same type of content on the same day of the week, give fans access to exclusive information or content, find your optimal time to post and take advantage of insights.

Figure 2: Purpose of Using SNSs by Librarians
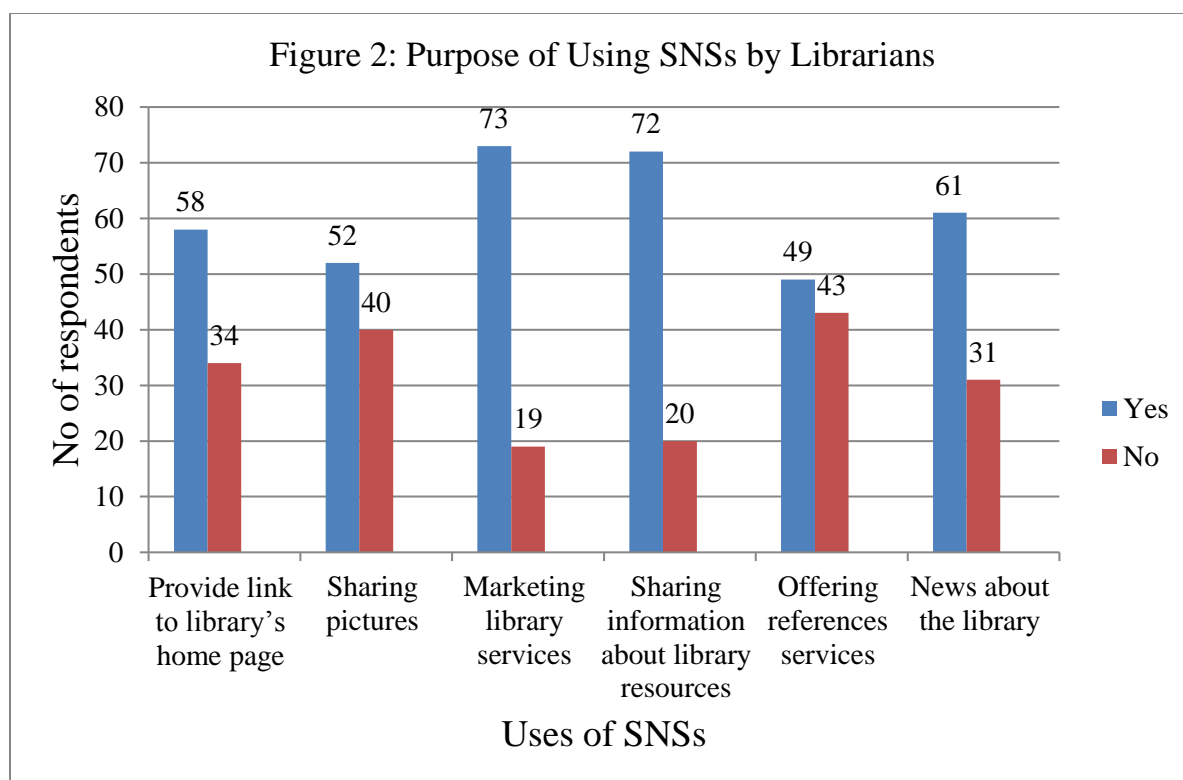
Librarians Rating of their Level of Skills to Use SNSs

In question 7, respondents were asked to rate the level of their skills possessed to use the SNSs. Interacting with friends and relatives was rated highest with 49 respondents, followed by searching and navigating different SNSs with 73 respondents rating it as high, applying information ethically was rated high by 55 respondents, and ability to evaluate information on SNSs was rated high by 52 respondents. Only 49 and 38 of the respondents rated their skills on using the SNSs to 'provide services related to librarianship' and 'creating content' on SNSs respectively to be high (see details in Figure 3). The growing use of social networking tools calls for librarians to develop 21st century skills on digital technologies. Some of the roles of the social networking literate librarian include: understanding and articulating the nature of social networking sites, creating webpage and content, establishing friendly user interface over the network, assisting user with skill acquisition, searching and navigating the web, creating social network space.

Figure 3: Librarians' Rating of their Skills to Use Social Networking.
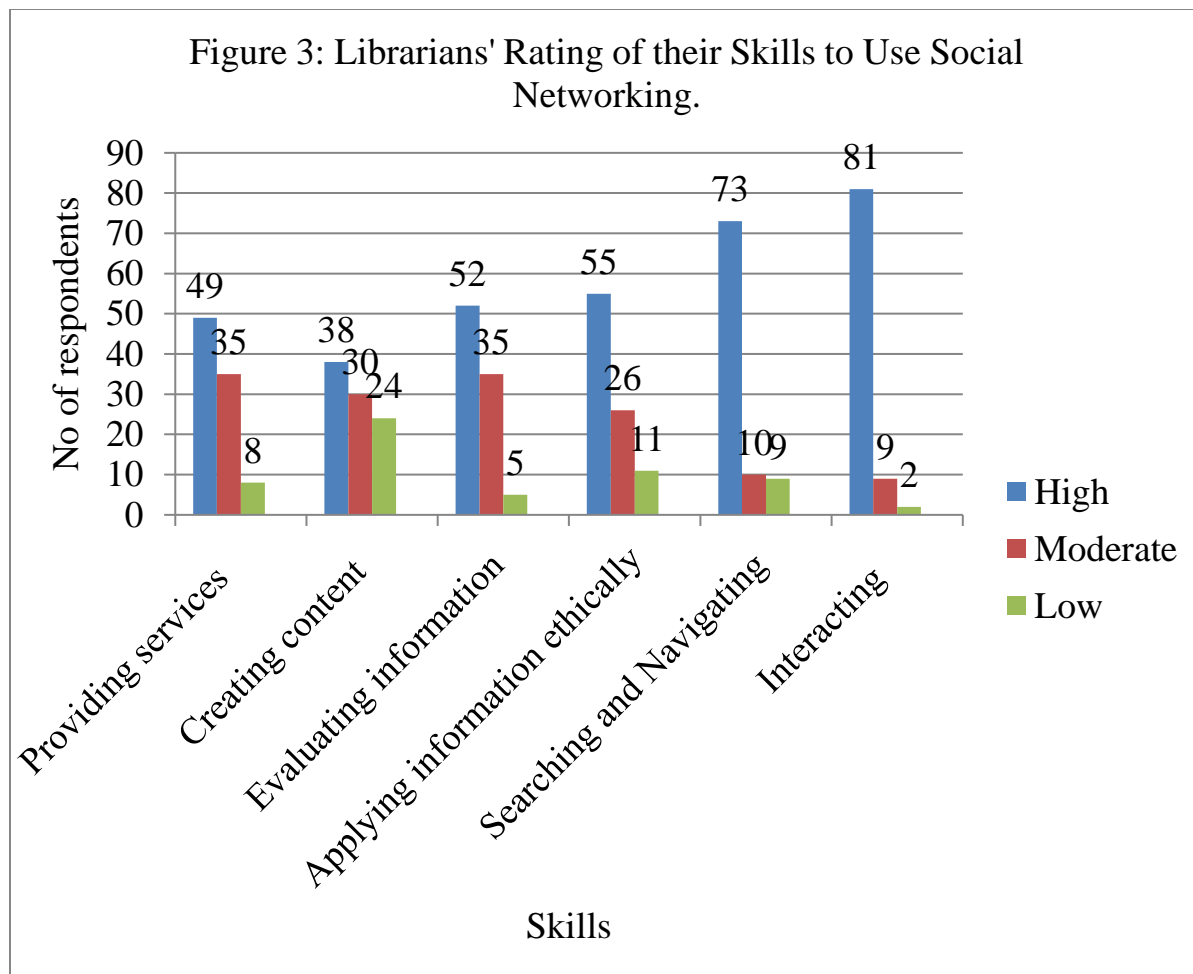
The Means through which Librarians Acquired the Skills

In question 8, respondents were asked to indicate the means through which they acquired the skills to use SNSs. They were asked to respond to as many items as applicable. The majority (83: 90.2%) of the respondents indicated that they acquired their social networking skills through 'self-practice', 62 (67.4%) respondents indicated that they acquired their skills through conferences/workshops, and 52 (56.5%) respondents indicated that they acquired the skills through friends/colleagues. While, only 13 (14.1%) of the respondents indicated that they acquired their skills to use SNSs through library schools. The finding reveals that librarians acquire the skills of using SNSs through self-practice, conferences/workshops, and friends/colleagues. This shows that library schools in Nigeria are not the means through which librarians acquire SNSs skills (see Figure 4). This finding supports earlier finding by Baro, Idiodi and Godfrey,

(2013) on awareness and use of Web 2.0 tools by librarians in university libraries in Nigeria that more than three-quarters (79.5%) indicated acquiring the skills through self-practice. Librarians in Nigeria are fast becoming equipped with mobile and tablet technologies as thousands of social networking sites become available. They are prepared and eager to adopt more and more virtual services that can improve their library services.

In the others "please specify" option 3 respondents mentioned acquiring the SNS skills through children. One librarian wrote: *Most staff members do not have interest in some of these ICT skills and its application, staff members are not being trained and retrained to acquire ICT skills to gain the knowledge of using SNSs.* Librarians in developing countries like Nigeria need a new branch of skills set specific to utilizing and leveraging social networking sites to provide quality services and maintain their role as information experts in a Web 2.0 world. The social networking literate librarian possesses the skills necessary to provide services with online social networking sites. Professional schools such as library and information studies need to focus even more on social networking sites, because of the possibility of reaching-out to wide audience by way of social interactions.

Figure 4: Means of Acquiring Social Networking Skills
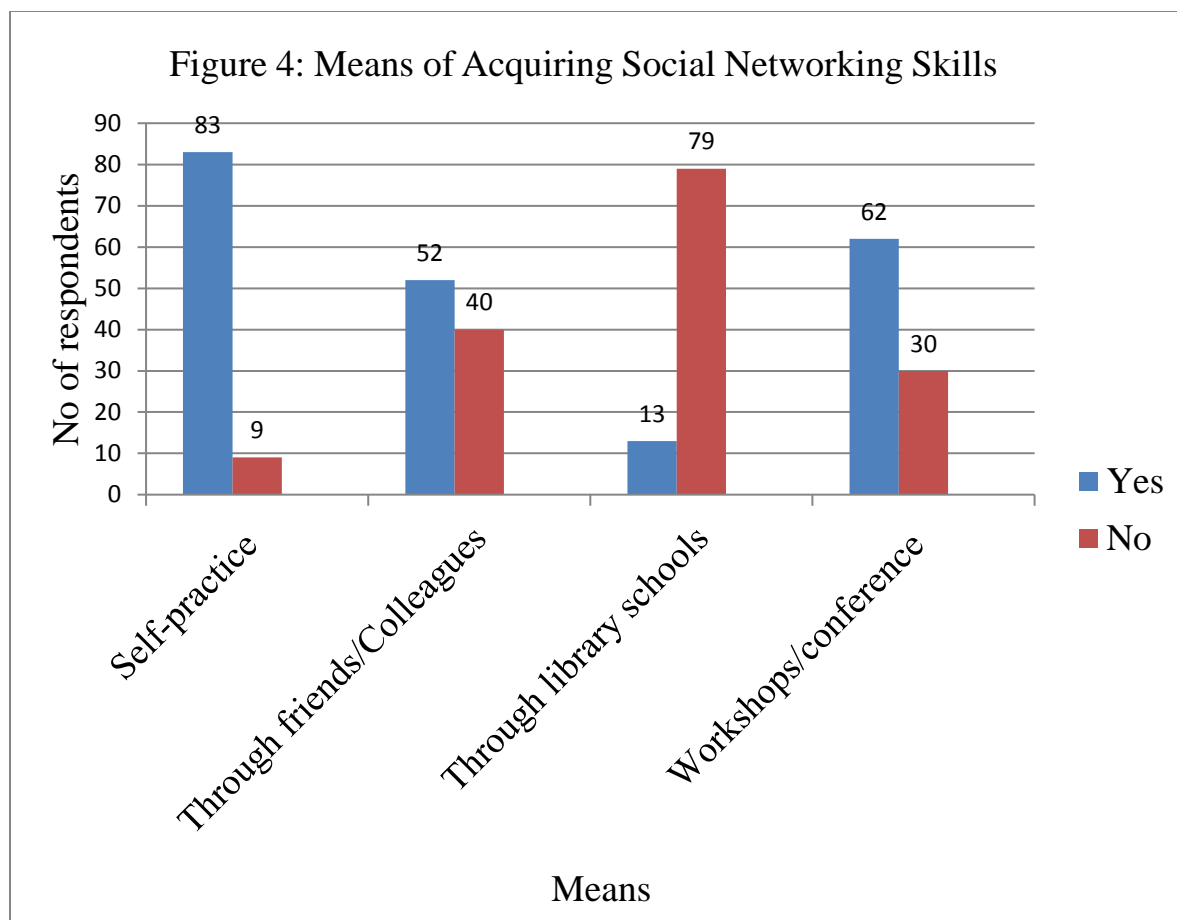
Some of the Challenges of Using SNSs

Question 9 asked respondents to mention the challenges they encounter while using SNSs. The responses were sorted according to similar themes. The majority (76: 82.6%) of the respondents mentioned power failure, followed by 69 (75%) that mentioned bad network/low bandwidth, 55 (59.8%) respondents mentioned lack of time (Table V). Several studies related to use of technology in Nigeria have identified similar challenges such as power failure, bad network or completely no internet connectivity (Baro, Ebiagbe and Godfrey, 2013; Ezeani and Igwesi, 2012; Adeleke and Olorunsola, 2010). University libraries in Nigeria and other developing countries can overcome the problem of power failure by installing alternative power sources such as solar energy. Despite the laudable directive by the National Universities Commission (NUC) for all university libraries in Nigeria to have stable internet services, not all can boast of stable internet connectivity in their libraries. One of the librarians wrote: *At times, no internet services and this*

will delay whatever one has in mind to do on time. Also, the usual power failure in Nigeria affects adequate access to the internet.

The present study revealed that more than half of the librarians indicated having no time to use SNSs for either library services or private communication with family and friends. This might be due to workload or schedule of duties for librarians. Using SNSs takes a lot of time, it takes just a few minutes to start a blog, a wiki or a MySpace page. But keeping all those technologies going takes significantly more time and effort. Blogs need posts, wikis need content and MySpace pages need updates. In other to engage users effectively with SNSs, library management should assign librarian specially to interact with users using SNSs. Some librarians especially at the senior level in Nigeria show lack of interest in using emerging technologies and no policies related to the use of the SNSs. This was confirmed by one librarian who wrote that: *The library management have not created platform where we could be connecting with users through SNSs.*

With the rise of electronic and internet resources, students feel reluctant to step inside the physical library or use a librarian in their research. Thus, many academic librarians advocate reaching students in their preferred environments in other to extend library services beyond the traditional library walls. According to Farkas (2007b):

> If libraries are not the first place our prospective users go to do research, they will likely miss any marketing we do on our own web sites. This is why we must start looking beyond their sites and toward putting our content where our users actually are (p.36).

Table V: Some Challenges Associated with Using SNSs.

Challenges	Number	Percentage
Bad network/low bandwidth	69	75 %
Lack of time	55	59.8 %
Power failure	76	82.6%
Some library users not on any of social network.	39	42.4 %
Inadequate competent staff to handle the SNSs.	41	44.6 %
Misuse of the SNSs by some for fraudulent activities.	25	27.2 %
No SNSs use related policy in the library.	15	16.3%

Lack of interest by some librarians	48	52.2%

How Nigerian Librarians can Improve their Usage of SNSs

Social media has the potential to facilitate much closer relationships between libraries and their patrons. Librarians in Nigeria and other developing countries should use social media for notifying news, share information about library resources and library events to users. Librarians should write good posts on the library Facebook page, this will attract users to like the library Facebook and share relevant videos on events held at the library on YouTube. Social networking sites like Flickr should be used to market general library services to their users, Facebook to promote general library collections, YouTube to video teaching information literacy skills, and Twitter should be used to build connections with other librarians and institutions.

Nigerian librarians who have not enrolled to use the NLA online forum should do so to become active users of the Nigerian Library Association (NLA) online forum' and Researchgate. Through the online forum, librarians share different kind of information ranging from conference notification, to job opportunities open to librarians, news about new appointments, and so on. Usage of social networking sites such as Facebook and others can be promoted to users in library instruction sessions. Librarians in Nigeria and other developing countries should emphasize the benefits of using SNSs to the students in other to attract them to get involved in using SNSs. The researchers recommend that academic librarians seriously consider making use of Facebook and other social and professional networks.

Conclusion

The study revealed that Facebook, WhatsApp, LinkedIn, Twitter, Skype and YouTube are the most popular SNSs used by the Librarians. Other social networking sites such as 'Nigerian Library Association (NLA) online forum' and 'Researchgate' were also used by the librarians. The study also revealed that marketing library services, share information about the library resources, and news about the library were indicated as the top reasons librarians in Nigeria use the SNSs. Furthermore, librarians in Nigeria rated their skills such as interacting with friends and relatives, searching and navigating different SNSs, applying information ethically, and ability to evaluate information on SNSs to be higher than others. The study also revealed that librarians acquire the skills of using SNSs through self-practice, conferences/workshops, and friends/colleagues. Libraries

have been particularly prevalent in their uptake of social media, and use it as a key medium for engaging with their users. As such, it is an issue close to the heart of how libraries in tertiary institutions in Nigeria are evolving.

Finally, librarians mentioned power failure, bad network/low bandwidth, lack of time and lack of interest by some librarians as the top most challenges in using SNSs in Nigeria. Arising from the findings, the Nigerian Library Association (NLA), Librarians' Registration Council of Nigeria (LRCN) in collaboration with other non-governmental organizations should organize frequent workshops on the application of social networks for library services. This will help to produce effective social networking literate librarians in Nigerian**.**

Librarians all over the world are responding to the popularity of social networking sites and their expanding roles in the creation, use, and sharing of information by engaging them as a central medium for interacting with library patrons and providing services to meet their information needs. According to Chu and Du (2013) "the phenomenon of social networking tools is likely to continue evolving rapidly" (p.10). Emphasizing on the future of social media in the library, the study by the Taylor and Francis Group (2014) reported that what seems to elude many libraries today is that social media (and the library websites) are their virtual front door. If those are not developed, it is least likely people will want to come to the physical collection.

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