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**Perception of Librarians towards the Use of Social Media for Information Service Delivery  
in Higher Institutions of Learning in Metropolitan Kano**

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**Abstract**

*The study was conducted to investigate the perception of librarians towards the use of social media for information service delivery in higher institutions of learning in metropolitan Kano. The study used a quantitative methodology using cross-sectional survey design to collect data from the respondents. The population of the study comprised 132 (one hundred and thirty-two) librarians drawn from the 13 (thirteen) higher institutions in metropolitan Kano. No sampling procedure was used because the population was low and was conveniently managed by the researcher. A questionnaire was the only instrument used to collect the data. A total of 132 (one hundred and thirty-two) copies of questionnaire were administered, and 120 (one hundred and twenty) were returned and found useful. The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. The findings revealed that the librarians under study were aware of social media tools, particularly Facebook 90.8%, Twitter 73.3%, and Youtube 73.3%. The findings also showed that the majority 96.7% of the librarians have positive perception towards the use of social media for information service delivery. The research further discovered several factors identified by the librarians that can facilitate them to use social media for information service delivery. The study recommends increased awareness of other types of social media tools especially those that are not known to the librarians through training programs on social media usage. The library management is also encouraged to be more proactive and support the use of social media in their libraries by providing adequate funding, facilities, training and retraining of staff for better and improved service delivery.*

**Keywords: Perception, Librarians, Social Media, Higher Institutions, Information Service Delivery, Kano**

**Introduction**

Social media has become a catalyst in reshaping the manner in which individuals and organizations collaborate, communicate, render services and create relationships with colleagues, peers and prospective audience. As librarians yearn to remain relevant with contemporary audience, social media is viewed as an important tool for enticing and retaining patrons who are already familiar with and immersed into the world of social media. Consequently, concept of a library as a physical place where one can visit to get information is rapidly changing to a social cyberspace where users access information, communicate and contribute to existing knowledge. The social media has gradually crept into the library profession which has become a growing tool that is being used to communicate with more potential library users; extending and offering better services to users. Social Media is a platform of Internet and mobile based technologies for interactive social networking built on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, which allows the creation and exchange of user-generated content for mass communication

(Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Social media are vital tools used for different purposes such as reference services, marketing, dissemination of information, communication with users and colleagues, creating awareness amongst others. To corroborate this view, Arif and Mahmood (2010) viewed social media as a tool that libraries can use to promote their services or to provide a means of communication with their clientele. Social media also has the capacity of improving librarians' professional skills in order to compete and work effectively in a rapidly changing environment (Onuoha, 2013). Furthermore, Akporhonor and Olise (2015) stated that facebook and twitter are important tools to share knowledge, promote library service, build library's reputation, and provide reference services to the user. Thus, these technologies have necessitated a shift from the traditional mode of service delivery to technology-based services in order for libraries to stay relevant to their dynamic community of users.

User perception means how the user sees and observes about the product he/she uses. The perception may not be the same as it varies according to the user's expectation and experience regarding the product. With this development and the important roles social media plays in library services, the perception of librarians on the use of social media is unknown. This observation is supported by Golden (2010) who stated that social media is perceived by librarians as a waste of employees work time. Furthermore, Ramzan (2004) found that, librarians in developing countries are not prepared to embrace the changes forced on them by the new technologies, and most of them were uncertain about the relevance of social media application in library activities as well as the benefits for their organization. It is in view of the above mentioned problem that the researcher aims to ascertain the perception of librarians towards the use of social media for information service delivery in higher institutions of learning in Kano. It was based on these premises that this study becomes necessary.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The broad objective of the study is to investigate the perception of librarians towards the use of social media for information service delivery in higher institutions of learning in metropolitan Kano. The specific objectives are:

1. To find out to what extent the librarians in higher institutions of learning in metropolitan Kano are aware of social media.
2. To find out the perception of the librarians under study towards the use of social media in information service delivery.
3. To identify the factors that would facilitate the use of social media for information service delivery in higher institutions of learning under study.

### **Hypothesis**

The null hypothesis stated below was tested for this study at 0.05 significant level

1. There is no significant relationship between the awareness of social media and perception to the use of social media for information service delivery in the libraries under study

### **Review of Related Literature**

The focus of the study was on academic libraries, which are viewed as the heart and soul of higher education institutions, especially universities as they support research and knowledge exchange activities that underpin the very existence of the institutions. By definition academic libraries are described as the learning community providing a place for students, researchers and

the faculty to do their research and advance their knowledge (Curzon & Quiñónez-Skinner, 2009). Moreover, Moran and Leonard (2009) mention that university libraries are indispensable to the functioning of the universities and the achievement of their academic missions. In order to achieve this, most academic libraries are incorporating new technologies. The dawn of new technologies provides librarians with opportunities to keep pace by exploiting information to develop their profession. Technologies such as social media applications are powerful technological tools for communication interaction, creating and sharing information. Thus, social media has evolved into a dynamic, interactive and collaborative platform that facilitates exchange of knowledge and information amongst its users. Social media offers the promise of a more vibrant and social participatory internet. It is pertinent to note that awareness or knowledge is pre-requisite to the use of new technology, therefore, not being adequately aware of these new technology and the potentials they offer in developing the librarian professionally and enriching library services will affect the librarian's ability to use and harness the social media. Zakaria, Watson and Edwards (2010) in their study found that librarians have significant unawareness with certain social media tools such as tagging and bookmarking. In the same vein, Anyaoku, Ezejiofor and Orakpor (2012) found that librarians do not have adequate knowledge of social media tools; as such not very popular with social media. Gupta, Gautam and Khare, (2014) also found that the awareness and knowledge among library staff on social media is very low as library staff are not adequately aware of the usefulness of social media application. Furthermore, the study of Anunobi and Ogbonna (2012) on the awareness and use of social media by librarians in Anambra State Nigeria, the result of the study showed low awareness of social media tools by librarians. The discussion above conforms to the real situation of librarians particularly those in metropolitan Kano, it is against this background the study seeks to find out to what extent do librarians in higher institutions of learning in metropolitan Kano are aware of social media.

Social media is a means of interaction among people of different ages in which they create, share and exchange information and ideas in virtual communities and network. Social media is playing an important role in today's online world. The traditional way of meeting each other is long gone and now the world meets on social websites. It is an instrument of communication which provides information and allows users to interact with each other. It is in view of this Lampe, Ellison and Steinfield (2008) stated that social media is gaining popularity as many users interact with others through it, thus understanding perception towards social media becomes essential. To use a new technology there are a lot of factors to be considered such as user perception, attitude, and how the technology benefits the user. It is in view of this Stephens (2006) stated that social media is perceived as the next embodiment of the world wide web, where digital tools allow users to create, change and publish dynamic content of all kinds. An exploratory study of 140 university libraries conducted by Samuel and Helen (2012) in Asia, North America and Europe on the use of social media tools in academic libraries found that most library staff had positive perceptions on the usefulness of social media. Similarly, Siddike, Kalam and Kiran (2015) investigated the perceptions of academic librarians toward the use of social media in marketing library services, and found that librarians had positive perceptions about the use of Word- of -mouth (WOM) as a marketing tool to promote library services, create awareness and build relationships with customers through other social media platforms particularly. More so, Kwanya (2016) perceived social media as tools that provide libraries with the ability to engage with users

in multi-directional communication and information sharing on a wide range of library-related issues; promote library resources and services; and extend services beyond the physical boundaries of library buildings by taking services directly to the users

The arguments above clearly depict that librarians in developed nations have a positive perception of social media. This is because their libraries have tapped the potentials embodied in social media. There is a gap in Nigerian context as the potentials of social media for service delivery are still not popular to librarians which makes it difficult to determine their perception towards the social media usage. Besides the positive perception of social media, negative perceptions also occur during the sharing of information online. In view of this, Awad and Krishnan (2006) stated that this involves a lot of cyber-crimes such as hacking, uploading fake information, inappropriate mailings etc. Furthermore, lack of privacy, reduced face-to-face communication and hence lack of emotional touch, (Ariel and Avidar, 2014). This argument conforms to the reality, as issue of security of information is very vital. Information on the internet can be hacked by unauthorized personnel. This however leaves librarians with a negative perception of social media as there is no privacy and security resulting to being reluctant to use the applications despite their potentials.

There are many arguments to compel libraries to use social media, as has already been discussed; these benefits are evidently positive and have effects for libraries in terms of rapport building; return visits, referrals and utilization of library resources. Benefits for librarians include increase in professional development, current awareness of library trends and emerging technologies as well as expansion of professional networks, and thus potential collaborations with other colleagues. Despite these benefits there are certain conditions which would allow for proper use of the new technology. These facilitating conditions are external catalysts which aim at facilitating the use of new technologies; they can make the use less difficult by removing any obstacle to sustain usage. Several factors influencing the use of social media into library services have been identified by researchers. A study has been conducted by Griffery (2010) who identifies several obstacles that hinder the use of social media, and the conditions that will assist librarians in overcoming these obstacles thus facilitating its use in information service delivery. In his study he indicated librarian and computer skills (skilled manpower and facilities) are the main factors for successful use of social media for information service delivery. He further emphasized that belief and attitude also play a fundamental role. This shows that the actual use of social media depends largely on librarians' personal feelings, skills and attitude. This implies that librarians who have positive attitude towards social media and perceived it to be useful and vital will evidently use it as a tool for effective information service delivery. Mathews (2006) found that access to computer and hence to the internet remains a significant factor in the use of social media for service delivery. In accordance with this view Yusuf (2005) in his study found out that in Nigeria generally, there is low internet connectivity, low participation in the development of IT equipment as well as low development in software development. This claim to an extent reflects the current situation of our libraries particularly in the north as some of the libraries visited during the researcher's preliminary study have no internet connectivity. Furthermore, Ely (1990) identifies eight conditions that should exist or be created that facilitate the use of new technologies: Sufficient knowledge and skill, availability of resources,

commitment by those involved, availability of time, reward or incentives, participation, and leadership.

### Research Methodology

The study employed the use of Quantitative research method. Survey research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprises 132 librarians in higher institutions of learning in metropolitan Kano. No sampling technique was used because the population was found to be manageable by the researcher as stated by Israel (1992) that “one approach to drawing sample is to use the entire population (census) if the population size is 200 or less; which tends to eliminate sampling error and provide data on all individuals in the study”. Questionnaire containing structured questions was designed and administered to the respondents. Data was collected on librarian’s awareness of social media, perception of social media and of factors that would facilitate the use of social media for information service delivery in the institutions under study. The data for this research was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics using percentages and frequencies was used to describe the data. while for the inferential statistics, chi- square ( $\alpha$ ) was used to test the hypothesis in order to determine the existence of relationship between variables. 0.05 was used as the level of significance for testing the hypothesis. A total of one hundred and thirty-two (132) questionnaires were distributed out of which one hundred and twenty (120) were returned representing 91% return rate.

### Findings and Discussions

**Table 1: Distribution of librarians across 13 studied higher institutions of learning in Kano Stat. Nigeria.**

S/N	Name of Institution	Year of Library Establishment	No. of Librarians
1	Bayero University Kano (BUK)	1964	87
2	Federal College of Education (FCE)	1961	11
3	SaadatuRimi College of Education (KUMBOTSO)	1974	5
4	College of Arts Science and Remedial Studies (CAS)	1974	4
5	Aminu Kano School of Islamic and Legal Studies (LEGAL)	1977	5
6	School of Technology (SOT)	1987	1
7	Northwest University Kano	2012	8
8	School of Midwifery Kano	1985	1
9	School of Health Technology Kano	1969	1
10	School of Management Studies	1999	4
11	School of Hygiene	1932	1
12	Federal College of Agricultural Produce Technology	2008	3
13	School of Nursing Kano	1968	1
	<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>132</b>

Source: Result of preliminary study

In terms of social media awareness, respondents were asked to indicate whether they were aware or not, as well as the level of their awareness. Their responses are presented as follows:

**Table 2 Social Media Awareness**

Social Media Awareness	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes I am aware	116	96.7
No I am Not	4	3.3
<b>Total</b>	120	100.0
<b>Level of Awareness</b>		
Not sure	9	7.5
High	84	70.0
Very high	27	22.5

**Source: survey 2015**

Table 2 showed that the majority, 116 (96.7%) of the respondents indicated that they have awareness of social media. On the level of their awareness, the table also shows that the majority, 84(70.0%) of the respondents rate their level of awareness with the social media to be high. The findings on awareness of social media and level of awareness cannot be detached from the popularity of social media among users. Further justification is the primary features of the social media; easy to use and convenient.

Respondents were asked to indicate the type of social media they are familiar with. Their responses are presented as follows:

**Table 3: Awareness of the types of Social Media**

Social media	Frequency/Percentage (%)		Total
	Yes I am aware	No I'm not aware	
Twitter	88 (73.3%)	32 (26.7%)	120 (100%)
Linkedin	43 (35.8%)	77 (64.2%)	120 (100%)
YouTube	88 (73.3%)	32 (26.7%)	120 (100%)
Facebook	109 (90.8%)	11 (9.2%)	120 (100%)
MySpace	17 (14.2%)	103 (85.2%)	120 (100%)
Ning	8 (6.7%)	112 (93.3%)	120 (100%)
Wikis	32 (26.7%)	88 (73.3%)	120 (100%)
Blogs	42 (35.0%)	78 (65.0%)	120 (100%)
Flickr	21 (17.5%)	99 (82.5%)	120 (100%)
Virtual games	14 (11.7%)	106 (88.3%)	120 (100%)
Second Life	5 (4.2%)	115 (95.8%)	120 (100%)
Delicious	9 (7.5%)	111 (92.5%)	120 (100%)
Social bookmarking	21(17.5%)	99 (82.5%)	120 (100%)
Social gaming	10 (8.3%)	110 (91.7%)	120 (100%)
Pinterest	8 (6.7%)	112 (93.3%)	120 (100%)
Others	7 (5.8%)	113(94.2%)	120 (100%)

Respondents were asked to indicate the types of social media they were aware of. The findings from table 3 show that the following percentages: 109(90.8%), 88(73.3%), 88(73.3%) represent that majority have indicated their awareness of Facebook, Twitter and YouTube respectively. The finding implies that the librarians under study are more aware of certain social media applications than others. This could be attributed to the lack of knowledge of the different types of social media available, coupled with the fact that other types are just emerging; therefore, awareness of such social media tools is very low. This corroborates Adaja and Ayodele (2013) who asserted that Facebook and Twitter are the most popular of social media, although new social media tools are emerging they are however not commonly used.

Respondents were asked of their perception on the use social of media platform for information service delivery using 5 point Likert scale: Strongly Agree (SA) = 5, Agree (A) = 4, Undecided (UN) = 3, Disagree (D) = 2, Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1. Their responses are presented as follows:

**Table 4: Perception of librarians on the use of social media in information service delivery**

Statement	Frequency/Percentage (%)					
	SA/A	UN	SD/D			
Use of social media allows librarians to create, change and disseminate information to users.	116	96.7	1	0.8	3	2.5
Use of social media technology allows librarians to share and collaborate with their colleagues	113	94.2	3	2.5	4	3.3
Use of social media helps the librarian to enhance information service delivery.	115	95.9	1	0.8	4	3.3
Use of social media allows the librarian to communicate for communication between the librarian and the user.	112	93.4	5	4.2	3	2.5
Use of social media enhances librarian-user relationship	107	89.2	9	7.5	4	3.4
Use of social media makes information sharing, dissemination and collaboration between librarian and the user more interactive	111	92.5	3	2.5	6	5.0
Use of social media allows librarian to tap the potentials embodied in the technology	88	73.3	20	16.7	12	10.0
Social media has no information security	78	65.0	18	15.0	24	20.0
I fear harassment using social media	44	36.6	23	19.2	53	44.2
Social media is very costly to use	46	38.3	19	15.8	55	45.9

Respondents were asked to rate their perception on the use of social media for information service delivery. Table 4 reveals that, the following percentages: 116(96.7%), 113(94.2%), 115(95.9%), 112(93.4%) 107(89.2%) and 111(92.5%) show that majority of the respondents unanimously have positive perceptions towards the use of social media for information service delivery. From the analysis, positive perception of the librarians under study was proved by

Davis et al (1989) who posits that individual’s behavioral intention to use technology is determined by Perceived Usefulness (PU) and Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU) of the technology.

Respondents were asked to indicate the factors that would facilitate the use of social media in information service delivery. Their responses are presented as follows

**Table 5: Factors facilitating use of social media**

Factors	Frequency /Percentage (%)		Total
	Yes	No	
Provision of state of the art ICT facilities	92(76.7%)	28(23.3%)	120(100%)
Frequent training, workshop, seminars on the use of social media	102(85.0%)	18(15.0%)	120(100%)
Positive attitude of librarians towards the use of social media	89(74.2%)	31(25.8%)	120(100%)
Sufficient knowledge and skills to use the social media	98(81.7%)	22(18.3%)	120(100%)
Librarian’s participation in decision making	93(77.5%)	27(22.5%)	120(100%)
Perception of social media as useful and vital tool for information service delivery.	82(68.3%)	38(31.7%)	120(100%)
Commitment of library management	105(87.5%)	15(12.5%)	120(100%)
Others	12(10.0%)	108(90.0%)	120(100%)

Respondents were asked to indicate the factors that facilitate the use of social media. Table 5 clearly shows that majority of the respondents were unanimous on the factors that can facilitate the use of social media for information service delivery, although 12(10.0%) of the respondents indicated that other factors such as establishment of unit to take the responsibility of the use of social media in the library, and exposing the librarian the simplicity of social media application in library services. The analysis shows that provision of the above mentioned factors to the librarians under study would go a long way to facilitate effective and efficient use of the social media in service delivery.

**H0- There is no significant relationship between awareness of librarians and the use of social media for information service delivery**

**Table 6: Relationship between awareness of librarians and perception on the use of Social Media**

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig.(2sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	1.278E3 <sup>a</sup>	192	.000
Likelihood Ratio	422.747	192	1.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	7.737	1	.005
N of Valid Cases	113		

The result of the chi-square test in table 6 shows that there is a significant relationship between perception on the use of social media and awareness of the librarians; where  $X^2 = 1.278$ ,  $Df = 192$ ,  $N = 113$ ,  $P = .000$ . This shows that, null hypothesis was rejected and alternate hypothesis was



accepted. The analysis shows that the perception towards utilization of the social media for information service delivery largely depends on the librarians' level of awareness of the social media.

### **Discussion of Findings**

On the awareness of social media, the study found that librarians in higher institutions of learning were aware of social media. This could be attributed to their level of internet skills and various sources of awareness available to them. An interesting finding is that the majority of the librarians were aware that social media is used as a tool for information service delivery which contradicts the findings of Anunobi and Ogbonna (2012), Anyaoku, Ezejiofor and Orakpor (2012) Gupta, Gautam and Khare (2014) who concluded that librarians do not have adequate knowledge of social media tools. It was also found that the librarians were more aware of Facebook, Twitter and YouTube than other types of social media which further confirmed the findings of Bola and Unuoha (2011) where they concluded that librarians are mostly aware of Facebook, YouTube and Twitter but still lack knowledge of other social media tools.

When asked about their perception, findings revealed that the librarians in higher institutions under study have an overwhelming positive perception of social media which was attributed to the librarians perception of the social media as useful and easy to use tool, their access to computer and internet facilities which reaffirmed the findings of Siddike et al (2015), Lampe, Ellison and Steinfield (2008), Samuel and Helen (2012) where they concluded that librarians positive perception of social could be linked to access to computer and internet facilities as librarians who had internet facilities perceived social media in a higher stage, and perceived ease of use of the technology which makes information sharing, dissemination and collaboration between the librarian and the user more interactive.

In an attempt to identify the factors facilitating the use of social media, the findings revealed several factors identified by the librarians under study that could facilitate the use of social media for information service delivery as compared to the studies of Griffery (2010), Mathews (2006) and Ely (1999) where they indicated that computer facilities and access to internet, sufficient knowledge and skills, participation, and commitment by those involved as factors or conditions that facilitate the use of new technologies.

Hypothesis was formulated to serve as a guide and provide answer to the research questions. The results of the descriptive analysis to test the first hypothesis rejected the null hypothesis based on the fact that there is a relationship between the librarians' awareness and perception of social media for information service delivery. The finding of the study corroborated Marshall (2009) who found that LIS professionals are well aware of modern concept of social media and also make use of them.

## Conclusion and Recommendations

The librarians in higher institutions of learning in metropolitan Kano are aware of social media and have a positive perception towards the technology; which can improve delivery of information services to the users. The present study has also highlighted factors such as training, provision of ICT facilities, sufficient knowledge and skills, and commitment by those involved among others that could facilitate the use of social media by the librarians in higher institution of learning under study. Base on the findings the study recommends increased awareness of other types of social media tools especially those that are not known to the librarians by the library through training programs such as conferences, seminars, and workshops on social media usage. Since the librarians have positive perceptions on the use of social media in library services, the library management is also encouraged to be more proactive and support its use by providing adequate funding, facilities, training grounds for staff in order to provide better and improved service to the users.

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