

Librarians' Awareness and Use of User Generated Content (UGC) on Social Media for Information Services in Public Tertiary Institutions in Katsina State, Nigeria

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Abstract

The paper examines librarians' awareness and use of user generated content (UGC) on social media for information services in public tertiary institutions in Katsina State, Nigeria. The study hinges on Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and sought to answer the following research objectives: To explore the types of social media used by librarians for information services and to determine the librarians' level of awareness of user generated content on social media for information services. Quantitative research method using survey research design was employed to guide the study and the population of the study consists of the one hundred and forty-one (141) Librarians in thirteen (13) public tertiary institutions in Katsina state. One hundred and six (106) librarians responded to the questionnaire with results showing librarians' awareness and use of social media user generated contents for content creation and sharing was quite diverse. The findings of the study indicated that Twitter and WhatsApp are the most common social media tools that the librarians are aware of and the librarians showed lack of awareness of LinkedIn, Instagram and Wiki. Results also revealed that Twitter, WhatsApp and Facebook were the most common social media used by the librarians for information services. In addition, the findings revealed that LinkedIn, Instagram and Telegram were the least types of social media used by librarians for content creation and sharing. This study concluded that despite librarians use of user generated contents on social media in public tertiary institutions in Katsina State, their level of awareness and use for information services is restricted to a small number of social media platforms. The study recommended that more focus should be geared towards increasing awareness and promoting the use of various available social media platforms. Increasing the awareness would help the librarians provide more information services to their diverse users.

Keywords: Librarians, Awareness, Use, User Generated Content, Social Media, Information Services, Katsina

Introduction

User Generated Content (UGC) is not an uncommon area of research. Verily, research in the area has grown phenomenally since its inception over the last four decades. UGC in the early 1990s is a concept for describing media content produced outside the professional media institutions. It gained worldwide spread and popularity around 2005 and the rise of the concept coincides with the Web 2.0 and the ability for industrialized media and culture production to take advantage of the productivity of ordinary users (Okuonghae, 2021). Similarly, UGC is a concept that has gained popularity with the widespread use of personal computers and the launch of user-friendly interfaces for search engines, video sharing, and social networking sites, etc., in the early 2000s, when media users suddenly became equipped with advanced means of production. The concept was connected to the rise of the Web 2.0 which is known as the interactive or participatory web,

and refers to the ability for everyday media consumers to suddenly turn into producers through the uploading and distribution of self-produced media content on blogs, wikis, social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram etc.) or other public online media. According to Hamid, Rebecca and Mona (2020), UGC appeared to librarians in the early 1990s, perhaps inspired by the concept of “user generated information” where different information is produced and shared to target audience that help them in solving their simple and complex problems.

Recently, researchers have conducted several studies to examine the relationship between awareness, perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, attitude and the usage of social media user generated content for content creation and sharing (Farhad, Reza, Hamed & Hojja, 2022; Ghalavand, Panahi & Sedghi, 2022; Daniella, 2021; Okuonghae, 2021). Their studies reveal that these variables are significant determinants that influence the usage of social media user generated content for content creation and sharing.

According to Farhad, Reza, Hamed and Hojjat (2022), awareness is the first stage of adoption and/or use of new technological development including the UGC. The authors however revealed that librarians can only use UGC when they are aware and understand its relative value. Daniella (2021) argued that librarians may be aware about the user generated content but indifferent attitude could be a factor of not using it. Awareness and use of social media user generated contents by librarians is generating discussions among various scholars and writers around the globe. For example, Okuonghae (2021) in a study on ‘librarians’ role in the creation of digital content in the 4th Industrial Revolution (4IR)’ explains that librarians in developed countries are well positioned to become professional digital content creators, as they already possess the basic skills needed to create effective content for high user engagement. Librarians are well positioned to use different tools such as blog sites, podcast, YouTube and wikis and are competent in their use. In Canada, Daniella (2021) asserted that librarians are information professionals who have good research skills, organizational skills, editing skills and communication skills which have become essential in user generated contents creation.

In the African context, Ghalavand, Panahi and Sedghi (2022) reported that there is limited contents creation via social media especially by librarians in Ghana. The authors highlighted issues such as lack of awareness, poor digital skills, and poor attitude of librarians. Jami Pour and Taheri (2019) have earlier argue that user generated contents are mostly used by people who are in businesses, film and entertainment industries (e.g. Nollywood, Kannywood) and those who sell their products or advertise traditional medicine among others. Contributing to the discussion, Kara, Çubukçuoğlu, and Elçi (2020) highlight issues delineating the use of user-generated contents by many academics including librarians to include the lack of defining and aligning goals and skills to create good contents, poor quality content, lack of technical knowhow and lack of understanding the relative value of user-generated content in digital world.

The rationale behind this study is to identify the types of social media platforms and to find out the level of awareness and use of user generated content for information services by librarians in tertiary institution in Katsina state of Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

Librarians have long been responding to new technological trends that offer improvement to the field of librarianship. User generated content on social media is one of the trends that have become widely accepted and used by librarians. Social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, Blogs, Microblogs, Wikis, WhatsApp etc. are now being use by librarians to create and share user generated contents. According to Deng, Zhang and Chi (2021), with the

advent of the user generated contents, librarians have started opening blogs, wiki-based information services, and YouTube channels where online tutorials and other forms of consultancy services are taking place with no geographical boundaries.

However, despite the promising information services provision opportunities offered by social media, its awareness and use by librarians in public tertiary institutions in Katsina State is not well-known. Preliminary investigation conducted by the researcher and several search on different databases (Science Direct, Emerald, Google Scholar, Jstor among several others) as well as various other literatures consulted did not reveal any empirical investigation that highlights the level of awareness, the types of social media used and the level of use of user generated content for information services by librarians in the State. Therefore, research is required to understand this phenomenon among librarians in tertiary institutions in the State.

Research Objectives

The study sought to achieve the following research objectives:

- To explore the types of social media used by librarians for information services in public tertiary institutions in Katsina State.
- To determine the librarians' level of awareness of user generated content on social media for information services under study.

Literature Review

Social media platforms have become the most popular channels for massive content creators to share experience and information in various fields, including fashion, health, hobbies and daily life, and product reviews (Al-Shibly, 2019; Azahari, Huwae & Nugraha, 2021) including librarians. Meanwhile, more and more people are used to obtaining information about products from social media platforms to form a preliminary awareness, so as to reduce potential uncertainty of purchase decisions (Baima, Santoro, Pellicelli & Mitreğa, 2022). For example, Instagram, a well-known instant photo sharing app, has attracted more than 2 billion monthly active users. Prior studies have indicated that the product-related UGC is very helpful for consumers to form understanding and cognition of products; and generate purchase intention (Chen & Kuo, 2017; Bernard, Weiss & Abeles, 2018; Chen & Wei, 2020). Thus, an increasing number of educators and information scientists began to utilize UGC as content sharing experiences and knowledge skills to help build brand awareness and loyalty (Bernard, Weiss & Abeles, 2018; Biancovilli, Makszin & Csongor, 2021). In this regard, both researchers and practitioners and other information professionals have strong interests to explore what factors make content more valuable and helpful on social media platforms, and how such influence occurs.

Types of User Generated Content on Social Media for Information Services

Use of social media serves as a dynamic landscape for content creation, offering a plethora of tools, strategies, and opportunities to craft engaging content that resonates with audiences and drives meaningful interactions (Ahmad, 2019). The use of social media for content creation has become a popular way for various professions in Nigeria to connect with their friends' colleague, customers and share information about their products. Social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter provide a way for farmers to create and share photos, videos, and written content about their farms and products (Alshibly, 2019). This content can help to build a community of supporters and customers, and can increase the visibility of the farm and its products. Chen and Kuo (2017) reported the use social media to connect with other farmers and

experts in the agricultural industry, and to share information and advice. It easily raises awareness about issues affecting farmers, such as government policies, trade issues, and environmental concerns. For example, farmers have used social media to raise awareness about the negative effects of deforestation on their communities. By sharing photos and stories on social media, farmers have been able to connect with others who are working on similar issues and to bring these issues to the attention of policymakers. Cedergren (2023) found that just as farmers use social media for content creation, so too do librarians. Social media has become an important tool for librarians to share information and connect with their patrons. Platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter allow librarians to share photos, videos, and written content about their collections, events, and services. Additionally, many librarians have started using platforms like Pinterest and Tumblr to share visually-focused content related to books, libraries, and reading. These platforms allow librarians to connect with a wider audience and promote the value of libraries in the digital age.

Writers such as (Daniella, 2021; Deng, Zhang, Ye & Chi, 2021) outlines how librarians are using social media for information services:

- Librarians are using social media to create digital exhibits that highlight their collections.
- They are using social media to promote events and programs at their libraries.
- They are using social media to connect with other libraries and share best practices.
- They are using social media to provide reference services and respond to questions from patrons.
- They are using social media to crowd source information and resources from their patrons.
- They are using social media to connect with authors and publishers.

Awareness about User Generated Content on Social Media

The level of awareness of technology plays a significant factor in its usage. Awareness in the context of this study refers knowledge of social media user generated content for content creation and sharing. Imran, Iqbal, Aslam, and Fatima (2018); Jabbar, Akhtar and Dani (2020); and Kader Jilan, Fan, Islam and Uddin (2020) have carried out different studies to explore the awareness and knowledge of user generated contents on social media for knowledge sharing in daily lives. The study revealed that while using any new social media tools, awareness is the first stage of applying it to any individual or organization. Shetty, Shilpa, Dey and Kavya (2020) opined that as the internet develops from a social network to an intelligent network, it has been a network of information and people and an intelligent network of everything connected with information, people, products, and services in the future.

User Generated Contents Created by Librarians

User-generated content (UGC) can be a valuable source of content for marketers and content creators. UGC can include blog posts, social media posts, photos, videos, reviews, testimonials, and more. The advantages of using UGC include increased authenticity, a more personal connection with the audience, and the ability to create large amounts of content at a low cost (Ahmad, 2019). However, there are also some potential risks associated with UGC, including the possibility of inaccurate or inappropriate content, difficulty in controlling the message, and the possibility of legal issues (Baima, Santoro, Pellicelli & Mitreęa, 2022). Social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube can be powerful tools for creating and sharing

content (Brown, 2020). The main advantages of using social media for content creation include the ability to reach a large audience, the ability to build a community around your content, and the potential for viral sharing (Cedergen, 2023). However, there are also some potential risks and challenges associated with using social media for information services (Daniella, 2021). These include the potential for negative feedback and criticism, the risk of oversaturation, and the need to constantly create and share new content to stay relevant (Brown, 2020).

Librarians can use user-generated content (UGC) on social media to create and share valuable information with their audience (Farhad et. Al. 2022) According to them (Baima et al., 2022, Daniella, 2021 and Cedergen, 2023), some examples of UGCs that are used by librarians for content creation and sharing include:

1. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) posted by users are used by librarians to create guides, handbooks and manuals.
2. User reviews/opinions/interests on library resources are used by librarians to create an index, a bibliography or a catalogue or library resource materials for collection development.
3. Tutorials created by users to help other users with specific tasks are being recorded by librarians.
4. User-created photos, videos, or infographics related to library services or resources are being collected and used to form a library gallery.
5. Testimonials from users about their positive experiences with the library are being documented and shared by librarians. Additionally, this helps more in promoting the image of the library and the librarians.

Moreover, the following are some of the contents created and shared by librarians to enhance the utilization of library resources and services:

- a. Information literacy resources such as curriculum mapping, library instructions schedule, videos and expert guides and frameworks for information literacy etc.
- b. Research guides.
- c. Library catalogues.
- d. Online resources such as databases, e-books and digital collections.
- e. Library guides and tutorials to help users navigate library resources and services.
- f. Book recommendations (book to read).
- g. Library history.
- h. Book and library related memes, jokes, GIFs (Graphic Interchange Formats).

Research Method and Design

Quantitative research method using descriptive survey research design was employed to guide the study and the population of the study consists of Librarians in all the thirteen (13) public tertiary institutions in Katsina state, which is one hundred and forty-one (141). Total enumeration sampling technique was employed and questionnaire was the instrument used for data collection. The data was collected personally by the researcher and his research assistants who were trained on how to carry out the exercise. Descriptive statistics using simple frequency tables, means and standard deviations were used to analyse the collected data. Responses on each item on the questionnaires are based on a midpoint average of 3.0 at which response would be regarded as agreement or disagreement. A mean deviation magnitude of 3.0 below would signify disagreement while above 3.0 indicates agreement. Similarly, low standard deviation results close to mean and high standard deviation results far away from the mean.

Results

Response Rate

A total of 141 questionnaires were distributed to the respondents from thirteen (13) public tertiary institutions under study, and one-hundred and six (106) questionnaires were duly completed and returned as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Response Rate

Name of Institutions	No. of Questionnaire Distributed	No. of Questionnaire Returned		No. of Questionnaire not Returned	
		F	%	F	%
Federal University, Dutsin-Ma	78	59	75.6	19	24.4
Umaru Musa Yar'adua University Katsina	13	10	76.9	3	23.1
National Open University Katsina	2	2	100	0	0
Federal Polytechnic Daura	8	5	62.5	3	37.5
Hassan Usman Katsina Polytechnic	11	7	63.6	4	36.4
Katsina State Institute of Technology and Management Studies	3	3	100	0	0
Federal College of Education Katsina	8	6	75	2	25
Isah Kaita College of Education Dutsin-Ma	6	4	66.7	2	33.3
Yusuf Bala Usman College of Legal and General Studies	7	5	71.4	2	28.6
School of Nursing and Midwifery Katsina	2	2	100	0	0
Sani Zangon Daura School of Health Science and Technology Daura	1	1	100	0	0
Kankia Iro Scholl of Health Science and Technology	1	1	100	0	0
School of Midwifery Malumfashi	1	1	100	0	0
Grand Total	141	106	75.6	35	24.4

Table 1 above showed that a total of 141 questionnaires were distributed to the respondents. Out of the distributed questionnaire, 106 (75.2%) were duly filled and returned, while 35 (24.8%) of

the distributed questionnaire were not returned. This high response rate was achieved as a result of subsequent follow-ups by the researcher, alongside the research assistants that were employed for the study. Baruch and Holton (2008) asserted that the level of response rate above 60% in social and educational research is considered a crucial factor in assessing the value of the research findings. As such, a response rate of 75% is acceptable for making generalization.

Descriptive Statistics

Types of Social Media Platforms Used by Librarians for Information Services

The respondents were asked to indicate types of social media used by librarians for information services. Therefore, Table 2 below shows the responses along with the mean scores and standard deviations of the respondents.

Table 2: Types of social media platforms used by librarians for information services under study (N=106):

Items	Mean	STD
I use Blog for contents information services	2.78	1.40
I use Wiki based information services for information services	2.60	1.39
I use YouTube channels for information services	2.96	1.31
I use Twitter for information services	2.78	1.49
I use LinkedIn for information services	2.27	1.14
I use Multimedia contents for information services	2.26	1.32
I use Instagram and Telegram for information services	2.48	1.15
I use WhatsApp for information services	3.36	1.45
I use Facebook for information services	3.29	1.24
I use Tik-Tok for information services	2.77	1.33

The types of social media used by librarians for information services and the result in Table 2 shows that, WhatsApp and Facebook are the most common social media used by librarians for content creation and sharing with means of 3.36 and 3.29 with clustering standard deviation of 1.45 and 1.24 respectively. However, the least of types of social media used by librarians for information services are LinkedIn Instagram and Telegram with mean deviations of 2.26, 2.27 and 2.48 with clustering standard deviations of 1.32, 1.14 and 1.15 respectively.

The study revealed that, librarians limit themselves to WhatsApp and Facebook to provide information services. However, there are a lot of opportunities to reach wider audience when using other social media platforms such as LinkedIn, Instagram and Telegram unlike WhatsApp and Facebook which has a limited range of features and capabilities, and they are not necessarily optimized for sharing knowledge and information. Contrary to the finding of the study, (Cedergren, 2023; Nan, Ding et. al., 2023) found that the majority of UK librarians were using Twitter, Instagram, Telegram, and LinkedIn to provide useful information services to the users. Cedergren also found that, the least social media tool used for content creation and sharing was the Facebook. The finding clearly revealed that, librarians in developed countries leverage social media for contents creation to enhance visibility, connect with their targeted audience, and provide valuable resources and services in the digital world while developing countries such as Nigeria

lack awareness for using real update time social media like Twitter, Telegram, LinkedIn for generating useful contents and connecting with the users.

Level of Awareness of Social Media User Generated Content for Information Services

Investigation of respondents’ level of awareness of social media user generated content for contents creation and sharing indicated varying results as shown in Table 2.

Table 3: Level of Awareness of User Generated Content on Social Media for Information Services by Librarians in Tertiary Institutions Understudy (N=106)

Level of Awareness	Mean	STD
I am aware that user generated content can be created and shared via blogs	2.71	1.31
I am aware that user generated content can be created and shared via Wiki	2.49	1.33
I am aware that user generated content can be created and shared via YouTube	2.77	1.19
I am aware that user generated content can be created and shared via Twitter	3.21	1.28
I am aware that user generated content can be created and shared via LinkedIn	2.14	.98
I am aware that user generated content can be created and shared via Facebook	3.00	1.45
I am aware that user generated content can be created and shared via Instagram	2.48	1.15
I am aware that user generated content can be created and shared via WhatsApp	3.36	1.45
I am aware that user generated content can be created and shared via Tik-Tok	2.56	1.14

Table 3 demonstrated that, WhatsApp, Twitter and Facebook are the common social media tools that librarians are mostly aware of for contents creation and sharing in the study area with mean deviation of 3.21 and 3.36 with clustering standard deviations of 1.28 and 1.45 respectively. This was followed by Facebook with a mean of deviation of 3.00 and standard deviation of 1.45. The least of the social media tools that librarians are not been aware of for content creation and sharing are LinkedIn, Instagram and Wiki with means deviation of 2.14, 2.48 and 2.49 with their standard deviations of .98, 1.15 and 1.33 respectively.

The data presented indicated that, there is low level of awareness by librarians on using the full range of social media platforms available for content creation and sharing. The study’s findings are aligned with that of Ghalavand, Panahi and Sedghi (2022) where they stated that, there is limited contents creation via social media especially by librarians in Ghana. This could mean that they are missing out on reaching a wider audience or connecting with a different type of user. Additionally, it is possible that the librarians are aware of the social media platforms that are most familiar to them, and not exploring other options that could be more effective for their needs. This could limit their ability to effectively engage with users and create content that is relevant to their audience. Also, the low-level awareness of Instagram, wiki and LinkedIn by the librarians outrightly limit their ability to reach a wide audience and connect with users in different ways. For

example, Instagram is a popular platform for sharing images and videos, and it could be a great way for librarians to showcase their collections and promote their services. Wikis are a great way to share knowledge and collaborate with others, and LinkedIn is a valuable tool for networking and professional development. By not being aware of these platforms, the librarians are missing out on opportunities to connect with users and create engaging content.

Conclusion

The study concluded that, librarians in Katsina state public tertiary institutions were only aware of WhatsApp, Twitter and Facebook for information services. As such, librarians only use these types of social media to write: (i.e., putting words on the screen from headlines and video overlay text through to copy for longer posts on Facebook or LinkedIn etc.) while uploading intellectual, artistic, and musical works, educational consultation service graphic design: for example, combining words and graphics into a meme, infographic and was found not being aware of by majority of the librarians in the study area. More so, WhatsApp and Facebook are the most common social media used by librarians for content creation while LinkedIn, Instagram and Wiki were the least type of social media used by librarians for contents creation.

Recommendations

In order to enhance the effective awareness and use of user generated content (UGC) on social media for information services by librarians in public tertiary institutions in Katsina state; the following recommendations were made:

1. There is a need for proactive awareness and training of Librarians by the library management through collaboration with TETFUND and other international educational interventions such as Global Partnership for Education (GPE), etc. on the use of user generated content on social media for information services by librarians in public tertiary institutions in Katsina State.
2. There is a need for librarians to use other social media tools like LinkedIn, Instagram and Wiki for information services like creating pictures, and displaying other information resources and services available. More so, sharing their published articles, videos and other intellectual contents through such tools for relative value will be of an added advantage.

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