

## Use of Social Networking Sites by Academic and Research Libraries: An exploratory study

Ekwelem, Vincent. O  
Victoria Okafor  
Scholastica Ukwoma

### Abstract

The purpose of the study is to ascertain the level of awareness and use of Social Networking Sites (SNS) by Nigerian librarians. Specifically the study looked into the purposes and benefits of SNS to librarians and also examined the problems facing librarians and strategies that can help to improve the use of SNS. The study gave a critical review of literature on Social Networking Sites, which provided a clarification of the concepts related to the work. Furthermore descriptive survey was adopted for the study; the population consists of more than 600 librarians that attended the 2012 national conference of NLA held at Abuja, Nigeria to mark the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Questionnaire was used for the collection of data from academic and research librarians. Out of the 230 questionnaires distributed, to librarians from academic and research libraries, 213 (92%) were found usable for the study. The result of the study on the use of SNS showed that librarians were mostly aware of Facebook, and Academic.edu. However, the study revealed that the majority of respondents with mean score of 3.84 frequently use Facebook. More than 32% of the respondents use SNS daily; 61% of the respondents use SNS mainly for finding useful research materials, respondents with mean score of 3.61 said that SNS are beneficial for search for needed information materials, 39% of the respondents acquired SNS skills through friends and colleagues. Respondents with mean score of 3.48 indicated that epileptic power supply is the major problem associated with the use of SNS. The strategies identified by the respondents to improve the use of SNS include, improve internet connectivity, provision of internet facility and steady power supply. The implication is that there should be provision for adequate power supply for these services to work effectively, training and workshops on ICT skills should be organized regularly to train librarians on how to use these SNSs. If this is not done many librarians will still be ignorant of this important medium of engaging communities. There should be more awareness on the use of SNSs as a medium for effective teaching of information literacy. The originality of this study lies in the analysis of Social Networking Sites in sharing information and collaboration with people in the educational sector. Its values relates to its contribution to literature on the use of Social

Networking Sites by librarians with specific reference to access to information in institutions of developing countries.

**Keywords:** Social Networking Sites, Awareness, Use, Benefits, Nigeria, Librarians, Academic,

### **Introduction**

In the emerging information society, one of the most important services with direct social impact is social net-working. The social media are a new form of communication, with the number of users growing at exponential rates. Facebook has more than 300 million active users, which rivals the population of the United State (Burkhardt, 2010). Similarly, there are over 100 million LinkedIn members, 5 billion images on flicks, 24 million pages on Wikipedia, 300 million Twitter users posting over 7000 tweets per second, and over 2-9 billion hours of YouTube watched per month (Tortorella, 2012).

Social networking is seen as a paradigm changing the communication world in which we live. This transformation is being driven primarily by digital technologies, particularly internet. The rapid and pervasive integration of SNS in our life has also prompted interest in its role in library services. Indeed, the adoption of this technology-based paradigm is strongly correlated with a society's degree of technological development. The number of libraries offering SNS in developed countries has increased significantly in recent years, as have discussions within the library community regarding the provision of such services. . In this view, Roblyer (2011) conducted a research on use of SNS in libraries and confirmed that librarians and researchers use SNS for educational and social activities. Beyond this key strategy, SNS implies other roles for librarians. For example, using their professional expertise, librarians can help researchers via SNS bring faster and broader access to the work of their colleagues and a far wider audience for their own work. Viewed from the perspective of Nigerian librarians, the question of how to employ this emerging paradigm to achieve broader library services and to integrate librarians more fully into the SNS is an issue of paramount importance. As a result of the information explosion of the last three decades, librarians are faced with the ever growing challenges of providing needed information to library users in multiple channels. The main function of libraries is about connecting people with information and this is what SNS is all about. SNS helps in reaching out to our communities and providing them information that they need in a very accessible way (Khan and Bhatti, 2012).

One important reason for the popularity of SNS is their emphasis on sharing content and linking one another which many people need for their research. The strategic aspect of SNS is that it involves wider participation in the creation of information shared and collaborated with people in educational, social and business setups. SNS is rapidly infiltrating the information environment and it is essential that librarians understand how best to use these sites and tools to better serve their users and reach people who have never before used the library (Landis, 2010). The successful application of SNS by librarians will itself create a selling point for the library, presenting a new image and awareness of what the library can offer. This has the effect of increasing the support for the library and offering new access point for library resources. Taken together with other sources of information, SNS services can provide librarians with new opportunities to widen the educational horizons of their users and provide them with extensive sources

of information, which if used effectively will also widen access to information resources throughout the world. Librarians are also expected to engage in developing and evaluating new services by integrating and applying their knowledge of library science to this new situation. They are also expected to communicate to their professional peers what they have learned so that their research can be added to the corpus of library knowledge (Sapon-White, King, and Christie, 2004). Librarians increasingly rely on information for their day to day activities. Social interaction ties therefore, are regarded as one of the antecedents in motivating knowledge sharing behaviors. The social interaction ties among individuals lead to creating trust and wider communication, producing positive effects on sharing knowledge (Chen and Huang in Chai and Kim, 2011). With the constant growth and distribution of student population and the ease of access to the internet, social media have been an essential part in keeping current and potential users well informed about our services. Our library has come to recognize that social media offer vast opportunities to engage with our users in initiatives that help our library grow and develop both its products and services" (Njoroge & Kangethe, 2013). No doubt with the introduction of SNS, communication has shifted away from face-to-face models of interaction to a more digital approach for information sharing and utilization. However, most studies conducted on the impact of SNS were on students. There is little or no comprehensive research on assessing the use of SNS among professionals such as librarians. Therefore the present research is an attempt to investigate the extent of use of SNS by librarians.

### **Need for the Study**

. There are numerous benefits of SNS and its popularity indicates that social communications can become a contributor to successful learning process. No doubt interaction has long been recognized as a key indicator in online reference service. SNS also provide more opportunities to reach target specific audience, and give chance to interact with millions of SNS users. It is therefore necessary to find out the extent of SNS used by academic and research librarians in Nigeria. SNS are internet based communication tools that help to find, advise, assist or get information in research work. This may be associated with high levels of receiving new information, ideas, opportunities, events and interests within the individual networks. They allow users to create profiles and allow professionals to exchange information. Professionals are also able to stay informed with new knowledge about their field. The 2012 American Library Association (ALA) release entitled the 2012 state of American Libraries "states that Facebook and Twitter in particular has proven themselves useful tools not only in publishing the availability of online collections, but also in building trusted relationships with users".

The present study therefore, aims at identifying the role of SNS towards the development of effective information delivery systems in libraries via the librarians. Even as SNS accelerate the pace of information dissemination to every aspect of our lives, it is important to find out the extent to which Nigerian librarians from academic and research libraries use this facility.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study:

- What is the level of awareness of Social Network Sites (SNS) among Nigerian librarians?
- To what extent is SNS used by Nigerian librarians?
- For what purpose do Nigerian librarians use SNS?
- What are the benefits of using SNS?
- What are the challenges that militate against using the SNS?
- What are the strategies for improving the use of SNS based services and resources.

### **Literature Review**

A review of literature on SNS indicates that there is a large amount of literature available on SNS, but little has been done on the use of SNS by librarians. This present study is an attempt to exhibit the present status of SNS use by librarians in Nigerian universities. Anderson (2005) describes social networking sites as a class of network tools that support and encourage individuals to learn together while retaining individual control over their time, space, presence, activity, identity and relationship. A social network service focuses on building online communities of people who share interest and /or activities (Dwyer, Hiltz and Passerini, 2007). Social media is an instrument on communication, Boyd and Ellison (2007) defined SNS as “web-based services that allow individuals to construct a public or semi-public profile within bounded system, articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system”. The nature and descriptive terms applied to these connections vary from site to site. In a similar vein, Madhusudhan (2012) noted that SNSs are internet based systems and services that allow individuals to create multiple public or semi-public profiles, either within or between different social networks; build a list of other users with whom they share a connection often referred to as ‘friends’; and view and communicate with their list of ‘friends’ and other SNS users. Powell (2009) defines social networking “as a community in which individuals are somehow connected through friendships, idea and so on”.

According to Burke (2006) social networking sites are loose affiliation of people who interact through websites. The web enables any person to build a vast number of relations with others, regardless of geographical distance. Although librarians are adapting rapidly to the emerging world of networked information, for example in the academic environment, more investments have been introduced to link those new online developments (namely web 2.0 applications) to learning, teaching and research. (Jabr, 2011). In another study by Madhusudhan (2012), on the use of social networking sites by research scholars of the University of Dehli, the author discovered that collaborative and peer-to-peer learning are common benefits as indicated by (71.25%) of the respondents, followed by collation of resources (64.37%), virtual meetings with scholars (61.25%), developing reading and writing for the web skills (58.75%), research and learning (57.50%), and increasing self-esteem and wellbeing (52.50%). Only 35 percent of the respondents indicated that they are developing an e-portfolio for future employment using SNSs.

Klein (2008) opined that one of the key benefits of this initiative of social media is to improved communication and establishment of a sense of community. Departments now have effective vehicle for delivering news, updates, forms, and files to the staff as a

whole. This is easy to use, flexible, timely, and more effective than traditional paper newsletters, websites, or centralized document distribution". Librarians and information professionals have often relied on information use as a measure of information needs of user communities. One important reason for the popularity of SNSs is their emphasis on sharing content and links. Farks cited in Roblyer, McDaniel, Webb, Herman, Witty (2010) argue that many academic libraries have developed a presence in online courseware with links to library services targeted to on-line learners. Matthews (2006) opined that Facebook had helped to meet the needs of his students in learning.

A study Virkus (2008) opined that SNS help promote the benefits of working cooperatively with tools that facilitate the aggregation and organization of knowledge, while at the same time demonstrating that the diversity of individual research interest enhances learning for all. This therefore helps users build or create a better person that is braver to be in a crowd. Among those arguing for SNS based information system in the library, Roger (2009) claims that many academic and public libraries in the United State have been embracing the use of web 2.0 and social networking tools to enhance services to library patrons. Libraries have been progressively implementing a wide variety of these tools but many are concentrating their efforts on the use of blog open source content management systems such as Joomal and Drupal.

The observations of Dwyer, Hiltz, and Passerini (2007) in an article titled "Trust and privacy concern within social networking sites' notes that a social network service focuses on building an online community of people who share interests and activities. In this context, the uses of SNS have become part of research scholars' daily routines. As rightly noted by Madhusudhan (2007) having SNS facilitates creating and maintaining a number of weak ties, "which may be associated with higher levels of bridging social capital, which have practical benefits such as receiving new information, ideas and opportunities". This is a revolutionary time in library and related disciplines. Although many different subfields are emerging, interdisciplinary research collaborations among these subfields are increasing. The knowledge of librarianship is expanding at an unprecedented rate. Because many students seem receptive to the idea of a library presence on social network sites, librarians should consider creating profiles for marketing and publicity purposes. One advertising technique that has worked well for some has been word of mouth through library instruction sessions, freshmen orientations, blogs and the library websites, where librarians can invite students as friends and ask those questions through the social network platform. Thus students will know that the options are there but not pressured by the more obstructive friend request (Connell, 2007).

Miller and Jensen (2007) advocated a "friend and feed" technique, "by which librarians make friends with many students and post regular updates to keep them up-to-date with the events of the library". On the issue of libraries using SNS, Connell (2009) among others, recommended that librarians "proceed with caution" on the decision. Connell (2009) revealed that most students seemed open to the idea of the library contacting using Jensen's technique but (12%) of the respondents had negative opinion because of the potential to infringe on their personal privacy. Njoroge and Kangethe (2013) discussed the benefits of social media highlighted that in their library social media has been used as a communication tool with users, this has enabled us to create a platform for questions and answered in a timely manner. Social media is seen as a

cheaper, instant and fast means of communication. Secondly, social media has also been a marketing tool for our library services and our information resources. It is also a means of creating awareness of new resources and sharing important links. Thirdly, social media has enabled us to modernize our library image and improve on our e-reputation.

Similarly, (Collins, Rahilly, Richardson, & Third, (2011) are right to point out that “in this era of instant global communication and access to worldwide information, the growth of students expectations is inevitable.” The fact that SNS are being embraced and adopted overwhelmingly by the students and research scholars of academic institutions and experiences shows that SNS are tool to mobilize a new generation students. In other words, by maximizing the benefits of SNS whether it is delivering educational outcomes, or facilitating supportive relationships, identity formation, or a sense of belonging and resiliency, many of the risks of online interaction such as cyber-bully, privacy breaches and predation, can be minimized. The ALA 2012 report reinforces the idea when it noted that “elaborated social networking is used to publicize library events such as gaming rights, to alert users to additions to collections, to provide links to articles, videos, or web content that might prove relevant or helpful to patrons”. It provides a conduit for community information. Social media also play an important role in fostering relationships with the community by allowing patrons to ask questions or provide feedback about library services.

Nevertheless, librarians also faced obstacles while using SNS such as Facebook. “Facebook firmly outlines in its terms of use that a group or entity cannot use profiles, so they are deleted. Facebook managers encourage librarians to replace the deleted institution user profiles with new personal profiles and to form groups to promote library services to patrons” (Miller and Jensen cited in Roblyer et al, 2010). Acquisti and Gross (2006) in a study found out that those with profile on Facebook has greater concerns than those who do not have profile on Facebook for concerns about a stranger knowing where they lived and about their schedule or class. However, a study by Chu and Meulemans (2003) found that several students felt that e-mail was the more appropriate method of communication to use with faculty. The study by Connell (2009) discovered that some students will resent library/librarians intrusion into their private space. Therefore, perhaps indiscriminate friendship is not a good idea. It is important not to annoy students but rather let them come to the library on their own terms. With the inclusion of SNS, libraries have made many improvements in an effort to overcome negative perceptions in the access to information domain. The use of social media tools to communicate and to increase engagement can have powerful and positive effects in the form of repeat library visits, rapport-building, referrals or positive word of mouth (Tiffen & England, 2011). Similarly in a study by Madhusudhan (2012) the respondents were asked to indicate risk and problems faced, when using SNS. Of the six choices made available in the question, the most common risk identified was privacy concerns-invasion of privacy (82%) followed by cyber-bullying-aggravated harassment transmitted through technological means(76.87%), unwanted attention from others (70%), data security-e.g. hacking, identify theft (65%) and access denied by a university (36.87%).

### Theoretical framework

This work will be anchored on the Diffusion Of Innovative theory, (DOI), which according to Rogers (1995) “is the determinant in explaining the adoption and spread of

new technologies or ideas in a community over a period of time". The author further stated that diffusion is the process by which an innovation is communicated through certain channels over time among the members of a social system. Diffusion research centres on the conditions which increase or decrease the likelihood that members of a given culture will adopt a new idea, product, or practice. According to Rogers, people's attitude toward a new technology [SNS] is a key element in its diffusion. There are four main elements involved in the diffusion of new ideas, they are (a) The innovation: (b) Communication channels: (c) Time and (d) The social system. Innovation involves the perceived new idea, in this case the new idea is SNS, the rate of acceptance by librarians depends on the degree to which SNS is perceived to be useful more than the already existing ideas, its flexibility and easy in adopting it as a means of knowledge dissemination. The medium of transferring the information to sensitize librarians contributes a lot to its acceptance. This medium can be through mass media, internet, workshops and seminars. While time involves the period it takes in the decision making process, to know if the idea will be accepted or not. . The social system constitutes the interrelated units involved in problem solving to achieve a common goal; the members of this unit may be individuals or management. In this case the universities are the social system while the librarians are members. Therefore the attitude of librarians towards adopting SNS depends much on awareness and the benefits of these sites and this depends on the extent the message is communicated to them. Communication and enlightenment are important as a means of sensitization for new innovations.

### **Methodology**

The research methodology adopted in this study is descriptive survey, questionnaire is the instrument for data collection, and questionnaire was specifically designed to collect data from practicing librarians in Nigeria to elicit information on the knowledge, use, benefits, and problems of SNS in Nigeria. Librarians in this study include the personnel employed in a library with the professional qualification of BLS, MLS or Ph.D. in Library and Information science. The questionnaire was administered during the 2012 annual general meeting of the Nigerian Library Association held in Abuja. This annual conference was unique in the sense that it marked the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of the Nigerian Library Association (NLA); over 600 librarians from different establishments such as Universities, Polytechnics and Monotechnics, ministries, banks, companies, public libraries and private establishments were in attendance. This afforded the researchers the opportunity to distribute the questionnaire to librarians from academic and research institutions. Questionnaire was distributed to the 230 librarians that were in attendance during the sectional meeting which was attended by librarians from academic and research libraries. It was administered on those with the specified professional qualifications to complete the instrument; 213 were found usable for the study, which is 92%. Some librarians indicated that they do not use social networking sites; as a result they did not respond to the questions and such questionnaires were discarded. The percentage that completed the survey is a good representation of the population. The data collected were analyzed using percentage, bar chart and pie chart and mean. For four points rating scale mean decision will based on 2.5, which implies that any responses that is 2.5 and above is accepted as a factor, while any one below 2.5 is rejected.

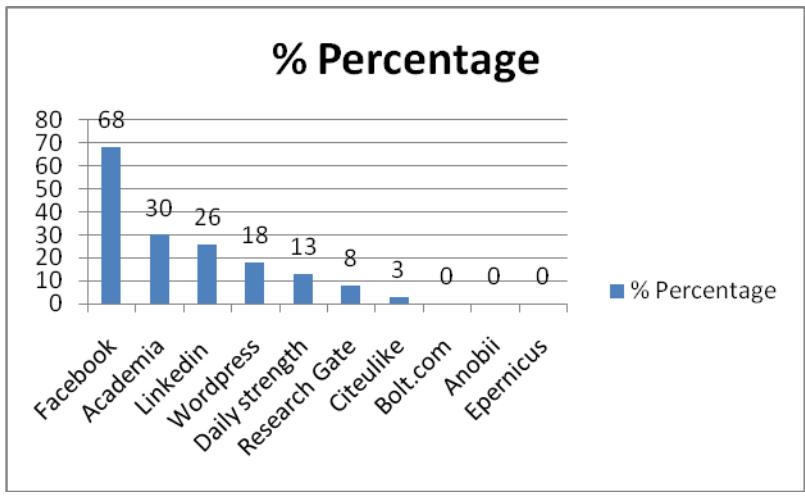
## Data analysis

**Table 1: Mean score of the level of awareness of using Social Networking Sites**

S/N	SNSs	VMA	MA	FA	NA	Mean	Decision
1	Facebook	179	34	-	-	3.84	Accept
2	Academia Edu.	64	68	34	47	2.69	Accept
3	Linkedin	45	72	34	62	2.47	Reject
4	Library thing	38	72	17	85	2.29	Reject
5	Research Gate	23	45	28	117	1.88	Reject
6	Anobii	17	28	34	134	1.66	Reject
7	Bolt.com	17	28	28	140	1.63	Reject
8	Sic Blog	34	28	28	123	1.63	Reject
9	Citeulike	6	34	23	149	1.51	Reject
10	Research ID	8	34	17	153	1.51	Reject
11	Wordpress	28	6	6	173	1.48	Reject
12	Scispace	23	6	11	173	1.43	Reject
13	Italki.com	6	17	28	161	1.37	Reject
14	Daily strength	-	34	17	151	1.35	Reject
15	Epernicus	11	11	17	174	1.34	Reject
16	We Read	11	11	10	181	1.31	Reject

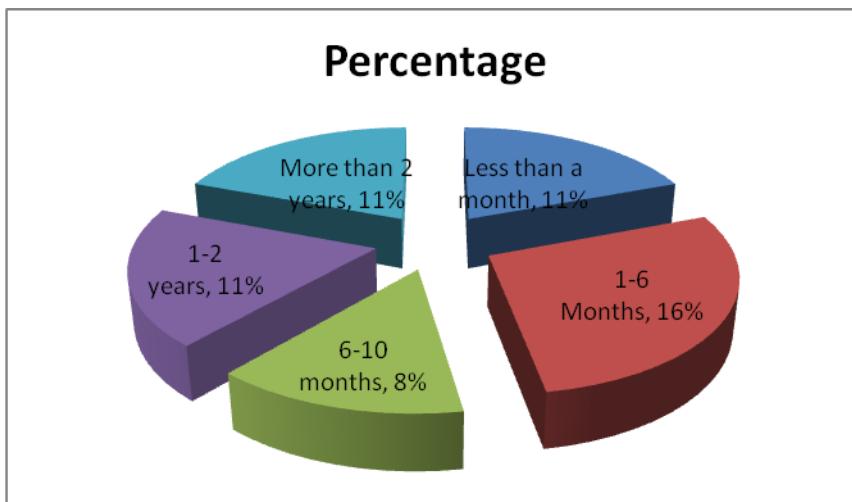
The study sought to find out whether the respondents are aware of different social network sites (SNS). The mean score revealed that the librarians are very much aware of Facebook and are aware of Academia Edu with mean score of 3.84 and 2.69 respectively. However the librarians are fairly aware of linkedin with mean of 2.47 and not aware of some Social Network Sites like Epernicus, Wordpress, Italki.com, daily strength and Research Gate this will be observed from their mean scores.

**Fig 1: SNS tools regularly consulted**



The awareness of SNS as shown in the Table1 above seems to influence their use. Fig 1 above shows that Facebook is regularly used with (68%), this is followed by Academia (30%), LinkedIn (26%), word press (18%), Daily strength (13%) and Citeulike (3%). The result of the findings also showed that SNS like Bolt.com, Anobii and Epernicus are not used at all.

**Fig 2; Extent of use of SNS by academic and Research Librarians**



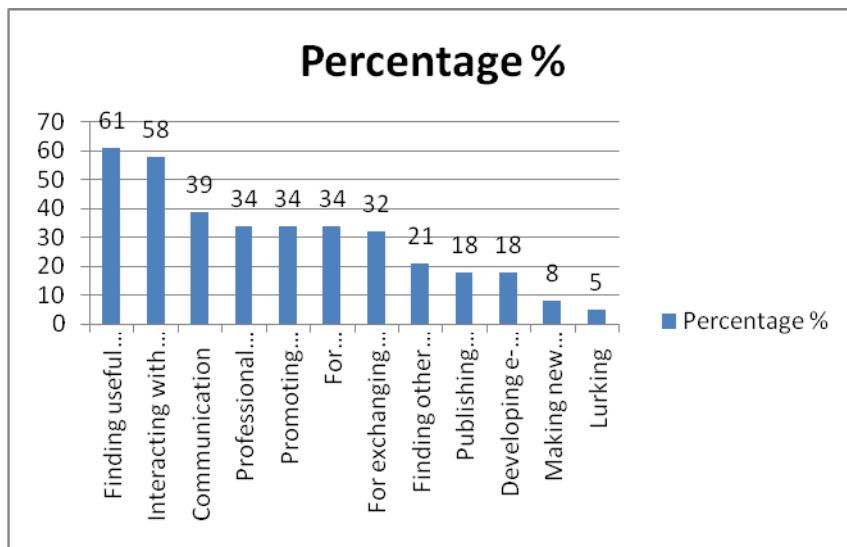
**Table 2: Rate of Use**

S/N		Frequency	Percentage %
1	Occasional	73	37

2	Daily	63	32
3	Twice in a week	16	8
4	Fort night	9	5
5	Monthly	-	-

In table 2 above 37% of the respondents indicated that they use SNS occasionally while 32% use it daily. However 8% indicated they use it twice in a week and 5% indicated fort night.

**Fig. 3: For what purpose do Nigerian librarians use SNS?**



From figure 3; 61% of respondents indicated that the purpose of using SNS is to find useful research materials, 58% of them use it to interact with friends, 39% in communication, 34% use it for professional activities; promoting personal research and entertainment. However 32% indicated that the purpose is for exchanging photo, music, 21% is for finding other researchers, 18% for publishing materials and developing e-portfolio, 8% use SNS to make new friends while 5% use it for lurking.

**Table 3: Mean score of the benefits of using SNS**

S/N	Benefits	VB	MB	FM	NB	Mean	Decision
1	Search for needed information	138	68	6	-	3.61	Accept
2	Keep up to date on current trends	145	51	11	6	3.57	Accept
3	Entertainment	128	68	17	-	3.52	Accept
4	Research update	151	38	6	17	3.51	Accept

5	Collation of resources	128	68	11	6	3.49	Accept
6	Assist in Research and Learning	128	51	23	11	3.39	Accept
7	Learn about new things	138	45	6	23	3.39	Accept
8	Professional issues	134	38	23	17	3.35	Accept
9	Collaborating with other librarians	168	2	17	-	3.34	Accept
10	Meeting new people	128	51	6	28	3.31	Accept
11	Socialization	89	64	60	-	3.14	Accept
12	Product inquiry	117	38	23	34	3.11	Accept
13	Self esteem	106	51	23	32	3.08	Accept

From table 3; respondents agreed that SNS are highly beneficial to search for needed information with mean score of 3.61, for keeping update on current trends has a mean score of 3.57, for entertainment 3.52, research update has a mean score of 3.51, collation of resources 3.49 learning about new things and used to assist in research and learning 3.39 respectively. On the other hand, it is used for professional issues has a mean score of 3.35, collaborating with other librarians with mean score of 3.34; meeting new people 3.31. However it is most beneficial for socialization has a mean score of 3.14, product inquiry 3.11, 3.08 for self-esteem.

**Table 4: Sources of Acquiring SNS skills**

S/N	Sources	Frequency	Percentage %
2	Through friends and colleagues	76	39
1	Workshop	73	37
5	In-service training	63	32
4	Trial and error method	41	21
3	Internal courses	35	18

In table 4, 37% of the respondents indicated that they acquire Social Networking skills through workshops, while 39% said they acquire it through friends and colleagues. However, 32% indicated that they acquire it through in-service training, 21% acquire it through trial and error while 18% indicated that they acquire it through internal courses.

**Table 5: Mean score of the challenges that militate against using the SNS**

S/N	Challenges	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Decision
1	Epileptic power supply	145	38	17	13	3.48	Accept
2	Privacy problem	100	72	28	13	3.22	Accept
3	Information literacy problem	113	38	38	23	3.12	Accept
4	Data security	89	68	34	21	3.05	Accept
5	Low bandwidth	83	79	23	28	3.02	Accept
6	It takes long time to view/download a page	79	83	17	34	2.97	Accept
7	Slow access speed	83	79	8	43	2.95	Accept
8	Unwillingness of librarians to	68	79	28	38	2.83	Accept

adopt SNS						
-----------	--	--	--	--	--	--

In table 5 above, respondents with mean score of 3.48 agreed that epileptic power supply is a major problem associated with use of SNS. Then respondents with mean score of 3.22 agreed that privacy problem affects the use of SNS, while respondents with mean score of 3.12 indicated information literacy as problem. However respondents with mean score of 3.02 indicated that bandwidth limitation is a problem; slow access speed is 2.95 and it takes a long time to view and download pages affects SNS is 2.97 and respondents with mean score of 2.83 agreed that unwillingness of librarians to adopt SNS is a problem.

**Table6:** Strategies for improving the use of SNS based services and resources

S/N	Strategies	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Decision
1	Improve internet connectivity	151	34	28	-	3.58	Accept
2	Improved electricity/steady power supply	145	45	23	-	3.57	Accept
3	Organized workshop on SNS	140	55	17	-	3.56	Accept
4	Increased Bandwidth	130	64	19	-	3.52	Accept
5	Provision of computer facilities	130	55	28	-	3.48	Accept

In table 6 above, respondents with mean score of 3.58 agreed that improvement in internet connectivity, will improve SNS services, improvement in electricity/ steady power supply 3.57, 3.56 indicated that organizing workshops on SNS will improve the use of SNS based services; this is followed by increase of institutions bandwidth with mean score of 3.52 and. and provision of computer facilities with mean score of 3.48 will improve the use of SNS based services.

### Discussion of findings

The results in Table 1 shows that majority of librarians studied were aware of the existence of Facebook with mean score of 3.84, followed by Academia.edu with mean score of 2.69 then by LinkedIn with mean score of 2.47. This is in line with the findings of a study by Fogel and Nehmad (2008), Weir, Toolan and Smeed (2011) and Roblyer (2010) which confirmed that the most popular SNS by far is Facebook, which according to its official statistics has more than 500 million active users, over half of whom log on Facebook in any given day. Similarly, to give further insight into the volume of communications handled by traffic, the official Facebook statistics also report that more than 30 billion pieces of content (web links, news stories, blog posts, notes, photo albums, etc.) are shared each month. On the other hand, librarians should be familiar with many of these SNS, apart from Facebook, academic.edu and LinkedIn, The mode of communication to sensitize should be repackaged to suit their needs, as was explained by Rogers (1995) in diffusion of innovation theory that peoples attitude towards a new innovation (SNS) depends on its diffusion.

On the other hand the study showed that 68% of the respondents regularly consult Facebook. This agrees with the study by Usudham (2012) who indicated that, 77.5% of his respondents used Facebook. On the rate of use, 37% and 32% of the

respondents use the SNS tools occasionally and daily respectively. This is consistent with past researchers, Ellison, Steinfield and Lampe (2006) which showed that most users tend to use SNS occasionally. This shows that librarians in Nigeria need to be sensitive on the use of SNS in information delivery in libraries, since SNS helps to communicate with users.

On the purpose of using SNS the bar chart on fig 3 revealed that (61%) of them use SNSs to find useful research materials, followed by interacting with friends (58%), professional activities , promoting personal research and entertainment (34%) respectively, and Lurking as the lowest purpose having (5%). Findings of this study is aligned with the findings of Duke and Jordan (2011) where they argued that researchers need encouragement and education on the worth of open access and need to be warned of the possible pitfalls in the use of academic SNS. Also in a study by Madhusudham (2012), he found that the search for relevant materials is the most specific use of SNSs (46.25%) followed by finding other researchers (35%). In terms of publishing materials, which is the principal issue addressed by this study, it was not substantially used for promotion of one's own research. In this study, we found that 79% of the respondents indicated that SNS are mostly used to collaborate with other librarians. Many researchers have listed the benefits of SNS. For examples, Chen and Huang, (2007), Chiu, Hsu and Wang (2006). In a study by Cow and Chan (2003), indicated that more extensive social networks among organizational members make more favorable influences on attitudes toward knowledge sharing and subjective norms about knowledge sharing.

Similarly, Virkus (2008) argued that SNSs help promote the benefits of working cooperatively with tools that facilitate the aggregation and organization of knowledge while at the same time demonstrating that the diversity of individual research interest enhances learning for all. The study revealed that there are several problems associated with SNS. For example, in this study, respondents with mean score of 3.48 indicated that epileptic power supply is a major factor that worked against SNS usage by librarians. The single most difficult access hurdle is that the librarians lacked the necessary infrastructure to provide needed services. This is in line with the findings of MacArthur foundation (2005) which indicated that libraries need reliable power and sufficient bandwidth to provide access to electronic resources. Similarly, in agreement with the above is a study by Madhusudhan (2012) which found that the most risk or problem cited was privacy concerns; invasion of privacy, (82.5%). Surprisingly, respondents with mean score of 3.12 indicated that they lack information literacy skills to use various services and facilities of SNSs available via the internet.

The study revealed that 92% of the respondents agreed that organized workshop on SNS would improve the use of SNS; this is closely followed by increase bandwidth and steady power supply. The epileptic power supply had affected negatively every aspect of our life in Nigeria. This is in line with the findings of Igun (2005) when he argued that supply of electricity need to be optimal to enable libraries to provide seamless SNS through Local Area Networks, Wide Area Networks and the internet.

## Conclusion

The changing role of the library profession has necessitated the introduction of new strategies to provide services to the patron. Some of the services as discovered from this

study are using Social Networking Sites (SNS) to provide information services to the users. It was discovered that librarians use some of the SNS; the ones used mostly by librarians include Facebook, Academic.edu, and LinkedIn. Their main purpose of using these SNS is for useful research; interaction with friends, for professional activities and to promote personal research. Based on the need and importance of these services, it is necessary that there should be constant power supply and broad bandwidth to enhance access to these tools. Librarians also indicated that regular workshops should be organized to train them on how to use other SNS to render their services effective.

### **Recommendation**

Based on the findings of the study the following recommendations were made to improve the use of SNS among librarians in Nigeria.

- Regular power supply is needed in the library to enable librarians have access to Social Networking Sites.
- There is need to provide broad bandwidth for library services. Some of the lectures and programmes uploaded to these sites contain pictures and video recording which are very heavy files. If the bandwidth is small, it which affect both the upload and download of the recordings.
- Internet facility is important for SNS programmes. It is only when librarians are online that they can communicate with users. This implies that internet should be increased and made available round the clock so that librarians in all the departments can have access to it.
- It is important that regular workshops should be organized for librarians to keep them abreast with the current trends in the library and information profession. Librarians should also be encouraged to participate in such programmes since they are designed to develop and equip them with the skills that will help them render their services. Also organizing departmental seminars is important at least on weekly basis to share ideas, and learn from other colleagues that are more knowledgeable. This will help to sensitize staff on the benefits and best use of these SNS for academic purposes.
- Definition of users of the SNS is important because it will help to avoid abuse and uninvited users to be involved in the site. It has been observed that most of these uninvited users always post comments/ write ups that are offensive and not relevant for the purpose of establishing the site. Therefore there is need to be conscious of what is published on the web to guard against sending our private details that are not meant for public use. This implies that viewers or friends to our SNSs should be defined from the setting. The issue of doing what others are doing without knowing the implications should be avoided. It is therefore necessary to understand the use of these SNS

### **References**

- Acquisti, A and Gross, R (2006) Imagined communities: awareness, information sharing, and privacy on the Facebook. Presentation at the 2006 privacy enhancing technologies (PET) workshop, June 28, 2006, Cambridge, England. Accessed on 20/09/2012 from <http://privacy.cs.emu.edu/dataprivacy/projects/facebook>.
- Anderson, T (2005) Distance learning social software killer up? Proceedings of ODLAA 2005. Accessed on 15/06/2011 from <http://www.unisa.edu.au/odlaconference>

- Boyd, D.M; Ellison, N.B (2007) Social network sites: definition, history and scholarship, *Journal of computers mediated Communication*, 3(1) 210-230.
- Barkhuus, L and Tashiro, J (2010) Student socialization in the age of facebook. Proceedings of the twenty-eight annual SIGCHL conference on human factors and computing systems, Atlanta, USA April 10-13. P133-142
- Burke, K(2006) Network to drive revenue, *Target marketing* 29(2)
- Chiu, C.M; Hsu, M.H and Wang, E.T.G (2006) Understanding Knowledge sharing in virtual communities: An Integration of social capital and social cognitive theories. *Decision Support Systems*, 42(3), 1872-1888.
- Cho, W.S and Chan, L.S (2008) Social Network, social trust and shared goals in organizational knowledge sharing. *Information Management*, 45, 458-465.
- Chu, C and Meulemans, Y (2008) The problems and potential of myspace and facebook usage in Academic libraries. *Internet Reference Services Quarterly* 13(1) p.77
- Collins, P; Rachilly, L; Richardson, A and Third, A (2011) The benefits of social networking services: A literature review cooperative research center for young people's technology and wellbeing, Melbourne.
- Connell, S (2009) Academic libraries, Facebook and MySpace, and student opinion. *Portal libraries and the academy*. Accessed on 20/09/2012 from <http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/>.
- Duke and Jordan L. (2011) Social Networking sites and their role in scholarly communications. A study for the center for research communications. University of Nottingham. Accessed on 20/09/2012 from [http://crc.nottingham.ac.uk/projects/rcc/social-networking\\_report-Duke\\_and\\_Jordan.pdf](http://crc.nottingham.ac.uk/projects/rcc/social-networking_report-Duke_and_Jordan.pdf).
- Dwyer, C; Hiltz, S.R and Passerini, K (2007) Trust and privacy concern with social networking sites: a comparison of Facebook and myspace. Proceedings of AMCIS 2006, Keystone, Colorado
- Igun, S.E (2005) Users and Internet skills: A report from Delta State University Abraka Nigeria. *Electronic journal of academic special librarianship*, 6(3).
- Jabr, N.H (2011) Social networking as a tool for extending academic learning and communication, *International journal of Business and Social Science*, 2(12) 93-102
- Karlin, S (2007) Examining how youths interact online, *School Board News*. 73(4) p 6-9.
- Khan,S A and Bhatti,R(2012)Application of Social Media in Marketing of library of Library and Information Services: A case study from Pakistan. Webology 9(1)
- Klein, J (2008) Social Networking for the K-12 set. *Learning and Leading with Technology* 12(5), 1-5
- Madhusudhan, M.C (2012) Use of social networking sites by research scholars of the University of Delhi: A study. Accessed on 20/09/2012 from <http://di.doi.org/10.1016/j.iilr.2012.04.006>
- Matthews,B (2006)Do You Facebook? Networking with students online. *College & Libraries News*,67(5) 306-307.
- Miller,S.E and Jensen, L.A (2007) connecting and communicating with students on face book. *Computers in Libraries*. 27:19

- Powell,J (2009)33 million people in the Room; how to create,influence, and run a successful Business with social networking Pearson Education inc.<https://idv.sagapub.com/cgi/content/abstract/23/4/266>
- Roblyer,M D,McDaniel,M,Webb,M,Herman,j,Witty,J V.(2010)Findings on Facebook in Higher Education: Comparison of College Faculty and Student Uses and perceptions of Social Networking Sites(available at <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.iheduc.2010.03.002> .
- Rogers, E.M. (1995). *Diffusion of Innovation (4th ed.)*. New York: Free Press.
- Sapon-White,R,King,V and Christie, A(2004).Supporting a Culture of scholarship for Academic Lbrarians.*portal:Libraries and Academy*,vol.4 no3 407-442.
- Solomon(2011)Doing Social Media in Libraries. Neal-Shuman
- Tiffen B &England A (2011).Engaging with clients and Personalizing services at UTS library:  
Measuring the value for libraries and their clients..*Australian Library Journal*,60(3),337-247.
- Virku, S. (2008) use of web 2.0 technologies in LIS education: experiences of Tallinn University, Estonia, programme. *Electronic library and information Systems*, 42(3) 262-274
- Weir, G.R S; Toolan, F; Smeed, D (2011) The threats of social networking: old wine in new bottles? *Information security Technical report* 16(2) 38-43