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# Factors Influencing the Adoption of Social Networking Tools in Federal University Libraries in Nigeria

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## Abstract

*The study examined the factors influencing the adoption of social networking tools in Federal University libraries in Nigeria. The descriptive survey used a quota sampling technique with a sample size of 414 academic librarians selected from the six zones of Nigeria. The questionnaire was used to collect information from the respondents. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used in analysing data collected. Statistical tools, including frequency tables and percentages, were used in displaying the results of the study. The study shows that social networking tools were adopted at various institutional libraries. The study found that Facebook, WhatsApp, YouTube, Instant Messaging, Twitter and LinkedIn were the most frequently used platforms, while Flickr, Slideshare and Wikis were the least known and used social networking tools across the various libraries. Comparatively, Facebook has the highest adoption rate and the most consistently used platform across all the institutions, while Wikis is generally underutilised in all the universities. Lack of institutional support, poor Internet infrastructure, and inadequate funding were the most pressing challenges. The study recommended, among others, that federal universities should share best practices and encourage peer learning among librarians to promote more balanced and uniform usage of social networking tools.*

**Keywords***:* Adoption, Social Networking Tools, Federal Universities, Academic Libraries, Nigeria

## Introduction

The advent of social networking tools has transformed the way libraries offer services to users as well as access information. Social networking tools enable users to have real-time and direct interactivity between librarians and library users. In recent years, social networking tools have received much attention in higher education as an increasing number of students have made use of social networking tools for different purposes, including retrieving and sharing information. Social networking tools enable libraries to create, share knowledge as well and disseminate information. With the introduction of social networking tools, it has become more fashionable for academic libraries in recent times to adopt social networking tools. This is mainly because social networking tools truly possess the capability to deliver a platform for learning where the students are potentially at the centre of the learning activities. Hence,

libraries and other information centres employ different social networking tools in delivering information services and receiving feedback.

According to Chugh and Ruhi (2017), social networking tools have been broadly defined to refer to 'the many relatively inexpensive and widely accessible electronic tools that enable people to publish and access information, collaborate on common issues, or build relationships'. Manning (2014) stated that social networking tools often refer to new forms of interactive media such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter and many others. According to Irbo and Mohammed (2020), the term social networking tools refers to the use of social media sites with internet-based features to stay connected with friends, family, contemporaries, or customers. Social networking tools can have a societal purpose, an educational aim or even a

business purpose, or a combination of all. According to Odede (2019), "social networking sites are regarded as modern interactive communication channels through which users connect, share ideas, knowledge, pictures, messages and experiences".

According to Vyas and Trivedi (2014), "the current dynamics of information and the recent technological revolution have compelled academic libraries worldwide to embrace Web 2.0 technologies". Many academic libraries have effectively accepted and implemented social networking tools as beneficial teaching aids, especially those in academic institutions (Tripathi & Kumar, 2010). Some of the most common social networking tools adopted in most academic libraries include "Twitter, Facebook, Flickr, blogs, YouTube, RSS and instant messaging" (Mahmood & Richardson, 2011). Social networking tools have been defined in diverse ways by different scholars. However, the definitions clearly denote that "social media tools are online tools whose principal aim is to offer social interactions between and or among people with common interests" (Chitumbo & Chewe, 2015).

Social networking tools are primarily web platforms that provide "two-way interaction between people, groups or institutions to build a common conversation" (Bedell, 2010). Simply put, "social network tools are online platforms designed to ease real-life connections, create and share content, and engage in conversations" (Barsky and Purdon, 2016). The ability to "create a personal profile portfolio; post comments, photos, videos, and links; add other users as friends; communicate with other users via e-mails and instant messaging; update statuses; and find other users' profiles using a search engine" are some of the features of social networking tools. Additional capabilities offered by several social networks include the capacity to form groups based on shared affiliations or interests, post live videos, and facilitate forum conversations.

Social media tools in general encompass a category of digital platforms that are mobile or stationary, which allow some form of active participation and interaction, unlike traditional media tools. Interaction can take place, for instance, with long-standing friends, relatives, or acquaintances, as well as with new acquaintances who have similar interests or even the same social circle. As social media tools continue to be incorporated into both personal and professional life, they gain importance and are increasingly expected to be fully assimilated into society, even though many of them were or are first seen as innovative. Through the use of the Internet and telecommunication devices, social networking tools are products of information and communication technology (ICTs), which have been passed down to modern society. While some can be accessed on a computer, others can be accessed on a mobile device. These tools leverage various digital platforms and technologies to facilitate the creation, sharing, and exchange of information, as well as the establishment and maintenance of connections between individuals or groups. Social networking tools are regarded as a central part of modern communication and have significantly added value to the way people interact, communicate, and share content.

**Statement of the Problem**

The rapid growth of social networking tools has significantly transformed how information is created, shared, and accessed in the digital age. Libraries, especially in academic institutions, are expected to leverage these tools to enhance service delivery, foster user engagement, and promote scholarly communication. In Nigeria, Federal University Libraries play a critical role in supporting teaching, learning, and research; therefore, the adoption of innovative technologies such as social networking tools is essential to meeting the evolving information needs of their users. Despite the potential of social networking tools to improve communication between libraries and their patrons, enhance access to resources, and facilitate knowledge sharing, there is limited evidence on the extent to which Federal University Libraries in Nigeria

have embraced these platforms. Without a clear understanding of these factors, libraries risk underutilising technologies that could otherwise improve their relevance in the digital era.

**Objectives of the study**

The main objective of this paper is to survey the adoption of social networking tools in Federal University Libraries in Nigeria. Specifically, the objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To ascertain the types of social networking tools adopted in Federal University Libraries in Nigeria.
2. To find out the benefits of using social networking tools in federal university libraries in Nigeria.
3. To establish the challenges related to the utilisation of social networking tools in Federal University Libraries in Nigeria

**Research Questions**

1. What are the types of social networking tools adopted in Federal University Libraries in Nigeria?
2. What are the benefits of using social networking tools in university libraries?
3. What are the challenges associated with the utilisation of social networking tools in Federal University Libraries in Nigeria?

**Literature Review**

The significance of the internet in the use of social networking tools is unimaginable, as social networking tools cannot be put to judicious use without internet connectivity, whether computer or mobile phone-based. The penetration of the internet, as well as broadband access, determines the use of social media (Chugh & Ruhi, 2017). The expansion of networks and the opportunity to communicate with a larger global audience are made feasible by the internet. Social media interactive tools offer a new form of communication and an unparalleled level of popularity. Additionally, social networking platforms have become more widespread than ever before in the history of the media industry. As a result, social networking tools have gained enormous popularity as one of the factors contributing to the growth and rapid expansion of social media. This is because they make it easier for people to participate, share information, and work together online, enabling users to engage in social media dialogues and create user-generated content in virtual communities. Social networking tools have come a long way since the first social networking site, Six Degrees.com, was launched in 1997.

Today, "the world is rapidly adopting newer social networking platforms and there are more than 5.24 billion social network users worldwide" (Backlinko Team, 2025). Social networking tools allow people to exchange information, opportunities, and ideas. Social networking tools are adopted and used across disciplinary divides and in various sectors of society, especially to be informed about new knowledge. Currently, social networking tools are being used by teachers and students to enhance teaching and learning experiences and to familiarise themselves with trends in their field of study. According to Khan (2017), social networking tools provide "users with opportunities to create and exchange resources, which has brought a lot of opportunities to libraries and librarians across the globe.

Social networking platforms are easy to use, affordable and available with a high adoption rate by libraries and librarians. Academic libraries globally have capitalised on social networking tools to communicate with users. Chu and Du (2013) enumerated the benefits and applicability of the social networking tools usage in academic libraries. Academic libraries have been able to convert their physical spaces into open spaces where anybody, anywhere, at any time, can access information thanks to social networking capabilities. The most popular social networking sites in the majority of academic libraries are bookmark sites, media websites

such as Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, WhatsApp, Viber, and Tango. It is impossible to overstate the advantages of libraries adopting and utilising these social networking platforms. According to Crawford (2014), "libraries were among the early adopters of social networking tools, leveraging it to quickly and easily engage, connect, network and share information and knowledge with their patrons". Although the acceptance and use of social networking platforms for promoting and providing library services began at a slow pace.

Libraries at the outset felt that they had slight or nothing to do with social networking tools, but with the numerous advantages, libraries have accepted and used social networking tools for the provision of library and information services. According to Howard, Huber, Carter, and Moore (2018), "social networking tools have become an integral part of libraries within the past decades and their adoption and use by academic libraries is ever-increasing". The 21st century has witnessed an incredible growth in the use of social networking platforms among students, largely for communication, recreation, entertainment and acquiring information. Social networking tools are regarded as channels that give academic support to students via the use of computer-related systems such as phones, laptops or desktops and many others to access educational content.

Academic libraries generally engage their users via various social networking platforms. However, some libraries may not be reaching and engaging patrons via social networking platforms due to certain factors. The utilisation of social networking tools has brought about numerous benefits, but it also comes with several challenges that individuals, organisations, and society as a whole must navigate. Studies have shown that the adoption and utilisation of social networking tools in academic libraries come with several challenges. In Nigeria, Nduka, Adekanye & Adedokun (2021) study on "usage of social media tools by Library and Information Professionals (LIPs) in selected Academic Libraries in South-West, Nigeria" found out that apathy, phobia and lack of awareness affect the use of social media in most libraries, particularly in developing countries. The study also found that inadequate bandwidth and archaic internet infrastructure, described as 'moribund', are constraining the use of social networking tools in libraries. These challenges have continued to frustrate academic institutions' intention to adopt and use social networking tools.

Similarly, Chitumbo & Chewe (2015) also admitted that, although some library staff had positive views about the efficacy of social networking tools, it is negatively affected by indecisiveness and poor acceptance. According to King (2015), many "academic libraries complained of few followers in their social media pages as students neither follow nor like their pages". There are many cases where librarians spend time on social media with no corresponding results due to a lack of planning, wrong choice of platforms or failure to comprehend patrons' needs. In Nigeria, erratic power supply has been a major factor hampering the operation of technological tools in most developing nations of the world, including Nigeria. Despite the continued political assumption of change in the power sector, power supply in Nigeria is still unstable. According to Nduka et al (2021), unreliable power supply is common in the Nigerian system, and it is a major problem confronting the acceptance and usage of social networking tools in Nigerian academic institutions, particularly the libraries. This situation adversely affects the use of social networking tools in Nigeria, as digital resources and other internet-based resources are not adequately utilised.

Similarly, the absence of staff training in the use of computer-related devices has been regarded as another challenge that hampers effective service delivery in libraries. Most librarians, especially those who belong to the old generation, lack skills that are essential in using social networking tools in delivering library services. This is evident in Anyaoku, Ezeani & Osuigwe's (2015) study on information literacy practices of librarians in universities in South East Nigeria revealed that "lack of competent ICT librarians, poor communication systems and

poor funding are some of the major factors affecting ICT utilisation in academic libraries". The study noted that the situation is not different in most African countries, where insufficient ICT skills of librarians, inadequate computerisation, infrastructure and human capacity are major challenges. Therefore, inadequate ICT skills of librarians can hamper social networking tools usage including other ICT resources. Furthermore, Odede (2018) noted that technophobia and lack of self-efficacy are also challenges affecting social networking tools usage in academic libraries. Most library staff and users are not enthusiastic about embracing these new technologies due to a lack of confidence; hence, some librarians are comfortable with the traditional library services.

**Research Methodology**

This study evaluated the adoption of social networking tools in Federal University Libraries in Nigeria. The study adopted a descriptive survey due to the nature and purpose of the study. The sample size is 414 academic librarians selected from six zones of Nigeria. The quota sampling method was used to select each federal university library from the six zones of Nigeria. Therefore, respondents were selected across the six federal university libraries, with one each from the six geopolitical zones of Nigeria. The institutions include: Federal University Gashua; Federal University, Dutse; Federal University, Lafia; Alex Ekwueme University, Ndufu-Alike; Federal University, Oye-Ekiti and University of Port Harcourt. A well-structured questionnaire was used as a data instrument because of the nature of the information required and the form of analysis to be conducted. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to analyse the field data, and simple descriptive statistical tools, including frequency tables and percentages, were used to show the findings.

**Demographic information**

This section focuses on providing background information about the respondents, including variables such as gender, state of respondents, age and marital status. This demographic information helps to contextualise the findings and understand how different demographic factors may influence the responses or behaviours observed in the study. The demographic data obtained from 414 respondents is displayed in Table 1 below.

**Table 1: Demographic information**

| S/N | Demographics | Frequency (N) | Percentage (%) |
|---|---|---|---|
| | **Gender** | | |
| 1 | Male | 203 | 49 |
| 2 | Female | 211 | 51 |
| | **Respondents by States** | | |
| 1 | Federal University Gashua | 54 | 13.0 |
| 2 | Federal University, Dutse | 72 | 17.4 |
| 3 | Federal University, Lafia | 60 | 14.5 |
| 4 | Alex Ekwueme University, Ndufu-Alike | 52 | 12.6 |
| 5 | Federal University, Oye-Ekiti, | 83 | 20.0 |
| 6 | University of Port Harcourt | 93 | 22.5 |
| | **Age range (years)** | | |
| 1 | 21 – 30 | 101 | 24.4 |
| 2 | 31 – 40 | 109 | 26.3 |
| 3 | 41 – 50 | 148 | 35.7 |
| 4 | 50 and Above | 56 | 13.5 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | **Marital status** | | |
| 1 | Married | 222 | 53.6 |
| 2 | Single | 126 | 30.4 |
| 3 | Widowed | 52 | 12.6 |
| 4 | Divorced | 14 | 3.4 |
| | **Total** | **414** | **100** |

Source: Compiled by the Author

By analysing the demographic data, results indicated that male librarians represented 203(49%), while the female librarians represented 211(51%). This indicates a reduction in the dominance of females in the field of librarianship, as it has historically been a profession dominated by women. With respect to the Federal University Libraries, results indicated that the University of Port Harcourt library had the highest number of staff, with 93 representing 22.5% of the respondents. This is narrowly followed by Federal University, Oye-Ekiti library 83(20%); Federal University, Dutse library 72(17.4%); Federal University, Lafia 60(14.5%); Federal University library, Gashua 54(13%), while the least is Alex Ekwueme University library, Ndufu-Alike with 52(12.6%). Regarding age distribution of respondents, the results show that the majority 148 respondents (35.7%) are between the ages of 41–50 years, followed by 109 respondents between the ages of 31–40 years (26.3%), and 101 respondents' ages 21–30 years, representing (24.4%), while the least in age distribution was 50 years and above with 56 respondents representing (13.5%). The majority of 148 respondents within the age of 41–50 years is significant as it is the most active in the workforce demographics. This age group often represents individuals with significant professional experience and stability in their careers. The marital demographics also indicated that the majority of the respondents are married, with 222(53.6%), 126(30.4%) being single, 52(12.6%) of the respondents are widowed, while those that are divorced are 14, representing only 3.4% of the respondents.

**Data Analysis and Discussion of Findings**

This section focuses on the analysis and discussion of findings relating to the research objectives. The analysis is anchored on research questions and objectives, while the discussion contextualises the findings within the framework of existing literature and theoretical perspectives.

**Research Question One:** What are the types of social networking tools adopted in Federal University Libraries in Nigeria? The data in Table 2 are used to answer these research questions.

**Table 2: Adoption of Social Networking Tools in Federal University Libraries**

| Social Networking Tool | Extent/ Awareness | UNIVERSITIES | | | | | | | | | | | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | FUG | | FUD | | FULAFIA | | AE-FUNAI | | FUOYE | | UNIPORT | | | |
| | | N0 | % | N0 | % | N0 | % | N0 | % | N0 | % | N0 | % | | |
| Facebook | Used | 52 | 96.3 | 71 | 98.6 | 60 | 100 | 49 | 94.2 | 81 | 97.6 | 93 | 100 | 406 | 98.1 |
| | Unused | 2 | 3.7 | 1 | 1.4 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 5.8 | 2 | 2.4 | 0 | 0 | 8 | 1.9 |
| Twitter | Used | 43 | 79.6 | 58 | 80.6 | 14 | 23.3 | 49 | 94.2 | 80 | 96.4 | 89 | 95.7 | 333 | 80.4 |
| | Unused | 11 | 20.4 | 14 | 19.4 | 46 | 76.7 | 3 | 5.8 | 3 | 3.6 | 4 | 4.3 | 81 | 19.6 |
| Wikis | Used | 5 | 9.3 | 4 | 5.6 | 10 | 16.7 | 4 | 7.7 | 4 | 4.8 | 6 | 6.5 | 33 | 8.0 |
| | Unused | 49 | 90.7 | 68 | 94.4 | 50 | 83.3 | 48 | 92.3 | 79 | 95.2 | 87 | 93.5 | 381 | 92.0 |
| Instant | Used | 43 | 79.6 | 48 | 66.7 | 49 | 81.7 | 47 | 90.4 | 69 | 83.1 | 78 | 83.9 | 334 | 80.7 |
| messaging | Unused | 11 | 20.4 | 24 | 33.3 | 11 | 18.3 | 5 | 9.6 | 14 | 16.9 | 15 | 16.1 | 80 | 19.3 |
| TikTok | Used | 42 | 77.8 | 45 | 62.5 | 46 | 76.7 | 44 | 84.6 | 74 | 89.2 | 75 | 80.6 | 326 | 78.7 |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Unused | 12 | 23.1 | 27 | 37.5 | 14 | 23.3 | 8 | 15.4 | 9 | 10.8 | 18 | 19.4 | 88 | 21.2 |
| Whatsapp | Used | 50 | 92.6 | 67 | 93.1 | 56 | 93.3 | 46 | 88.5 | 77 | 92.8 | 85 | 91.4 | 381 | 92.0 |
| | Unused | 4 | 7.4 | 5 | 6.9 | 4 | 6.7 | 6 | 11.5 | 6 | 7.2 | 8 | 8.6 | 33 | 8.0 |
| Flickr | Used | 8 | 14.8 | 8 | 11.1 | 7 | 11.7 | 9 | 17.3 | 13 | 15.7 | 17 | 18.3 | 62 | 15.0 |
| | Unused | 46 | 85.2 | 64 | 88.9 | 53 | 88.3 | 43 | 82.7 | 70 | 84.3 | 76 | 81.7 | 352 | 85.0 |
| LinkedIn | Used | 45 | 83.3 | 60 | 83.3 | 50 | 83.3 | 39 | 75.0 | 66 | 79.5 | 73 | 78.5 | 333 | 80.4 |
| | Unused | 9 | 16.7 | 12 | 16.7 | 10 | 16.7 | 13 | 25.0 | 17 | 20.1 | 20 | 21.5 | 81 | 19.6 |
| YouTube | Used | 48 | 88.9 | 65 | 90.3 | 53 | 88.3 | 43 | 82.7 | 73 | 88.0 | 79 | 84.9 | 361 | 87.2 |
| | Unused | 6 | 11.1 | 7 | 9.7 | 7 | 11.7 | 9 | 17.3 | 10 | 12.0 | 14 | 15.1 | 53 | 12.8 |
| Slideshare | Used | 5 | 9.3 | 6 | 8.3 | 5 | 8.3 | 7 | 13.5 | 11 | 13.3 | 12 | 12.9 | 46 | 11.1 |
| | Unused | 49 | 90.7 | 66 | 91.7 | 55 | 91.7 | 45 | 86.5 | 72 | 86.7 | 81 | 87.1 | 368 | 88.9 |

Source: Compiled by the Author

The use of social networking tools in Nigerian Federal University Libraries was revealed by the data in Table 2. All of the sampled respondents were aware of the social networking tools used by university libraries, according to the results shown in Table 2. In response to further questions, participants were permitted to provide instances of social networking tools they were familiar with and the degree to which they were utilised in university libraries, as shown in Table 2. According to the study, librarians at Nigeria's Federal Universities were familiar with social networking tools like Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, WhatsApp, and Instant Messaging. However, respondents were more aware of and highly used Facebook (98.1%) than any other social networking tool in the library. Similarly, WhatsApp recorded high usage with 92.0% while YouTube recorded 87.2% affirmation with respect to the extent of usage of Social Networking Tools among Librarians in the selected Federal universities in Nigeria. This finding corroborates some studies that identified Facebook, WhatsApp and YouTube as the three most increasingly used social networking tools in the university libraries. A study by Olatokun and Opesade (2017) on "social media tools and academic performance of students in Nigerian universities" revealed that Facebook, WhatsApp, and YouTube were identified as the most used tools among undergraduates.

Similarly, Onuoha and Saheed's (2021) study on social media utilisation by library and information science students in Federal universities in Nigeria revealed that Facebook and WhatsApp were among the most recurrently used platforms by LIS students for academic and communication purposes. A study conducted in Ghana by Agyekum, Arthur and Trivedi (2016) on the "adoption of social networking tools in public university libraries in Ghana" revealed that Facebook and YouTube are the most utilised social networking tools used by professional librarians. Others include instant messaging, Twitter, LinkedIn, TikTok, Flickr, Slideshare, and Wikis. However, findings on WhatsApp are not confirmed by the study conducted in Ghana. The present study also revealed the high usage of Instant Messaging (80.7%), while Twitter and LinkedIn usage stood at 80.4%, respectively, for both social networking tools. However, this finding shows that Twitter and LinkedIn are not among the top three social networking tools used in libraries. Hence, the present finding contradicts Agyekum, Arthur and Trivedi's (2016) study that listed Facebook, Instant messaging and LinkedIn as the three most prominent and well-utilised library resource tools. The present study, contrarily, revealed that the top three most conspicuous and well-utilised social networking tools used by the libraries are Facebook, WhatsApp and YouTube.

This finding could be that these platforms are easy to use across devices (smartphones, tablets, and computers). For example, WhatsApp is especially popular for instant communication, quick alerts, and group discussions, while Facebook and YouTube support diverse content formats and allow easy access to multimedia resources, as well as ease of use and popularity in Nigeria. Hence, Asemi and Talkhabi (2016) also found that Facebook is widely used by university libraries to engage users, disseminate library news, and promote

services. Similarly, Okike and Adetoro (2019) noted that WhatsApp is extensively used in Nigerian academic libraries for instant communication with users and staff collaboration. Furthermore, findings also revealed that TikTok is gaining popularity among library users with (78.7% level of awareness and utilisation. However, the least known and used social networking tools used in the libraries are Flickr (15.0%), Slideshare (11.1%) and Wikis, with only 8.0% usage. This may reflect a lack of training or integration, or may not be popular among library users despite being useful.

**Table 3: Comparison among Universities (Platform-by-Platform Highlights)**

| S/n | Platform | Highest Adopting University | Lowest Adopting University |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Facebook | FULAFIA & UNIPORT (100%) | AE-FUNAI (94.2%) |
| 2 | Twitter | AE-FUNAI (94.2%) | FULAFIA (23.3%) |
| 3 | Wikis | FULAFIA (16.7%) | FUOYE (4.8%) |
| 4 | Instant Messaging | AE-FUNAI (90.4%) | FUD (66.7%) |
| 5 | TikTok | FUOYE (89.2%) | FUD (62.5%) |
| 6 | Whatsapp | FULAFIA (93.3%) | AE-FUNAI (88.5%) |
| 7 | Flickr | UNIPORT (18.3%) | FULAFIA (11.7%) |
| 8 | LinkedIn | FUG, FUD, FULAFIA (83.3%) | AE-FUNAI (75%) |
| 9 | YouTube | FUD (90.3%) | AE-FUNAI (82.7%) |
| 10 | Slideshare | UNIPORT (12.9%) | FUG (9.3%) |

Source: Compiled by the Author

In comparison, data in Table 3 indicate that the extent of awareness and usage of Facebook at FULAFIA & UNIPORT is very high, with 100% extent of awareness, while the lowest adopting institution about Facebook is AE-FUNAI, but with 94.2% extent. This shows that Facebook has nearly universal adoption across all universities, with usage above 94% in all the institutions. It is clearly the most consistently used platform. This is an indication that Facebook is popular among higher institutions in Nigeria. Twitter shows the greatest usage disparity among the institutions. While AE-FUNAI has high engagement with (94.2%), FULAFIA's very low usage of (23.3%) suggests that Twitter is not a priority or common social networking tool there. Institutional preferences and digital culture may account for these results. The next social networking tool to be compared is Wikis. Results indicated that Wikis are generally underutilised in all the selected universities, with adoption not exceeding 17%. This suggests a limited use of collaborative documentation tools in academic contexts. The highest adoption rate is by FULAFIA with (16.7%), while the lowest is by FUOYE with (4.8%. Instant messaging is widely adopted, as indicated in Table 2, especially in AE-FUNAI, with 90.4%. The lower percentage is FUD with (66.7%), which is above average, and may point to institutional constraints or preferences for alternative communication platforms. TikTok has relatively strong usage across all institutions from the comparison Table, particularly in FUOYE, possibly due to youth engagement trends.

However, FUD shows lower engagement with (62.5%), which is also above average. This lower engagement, despite being above average, may be due to institutional policies or a more formal digital culture. Similarly, WhatsApp has high and fairly uniform adoption, making it one of the most stable and common communication tools across all institutions. From Table 3, FULAFIA (93.3%) has the highest adoption rate across the universities, while AE-FUNAI (88.5%) recorded the lowest. Hence, it is one of the top three most popular and used social networking tools in Nigerian universities. Flickr is another very minimally used social networking tool in all the selected universities. From the Table, the highest adopting university is UNIPORT with only 18.3%, while the lowest is FULAFIA with 11.7%. This suggests that

it is not a major tool for media sharing in academic environments. On the other hand, LinkedIn is well adopted across all institutions, with a narrow range of adoption (75–83.3%), showing its importance for professional networking in the academic environment. Similarly, YouTube is widely used across all universities, with the highest rate of (90.3%) for FUD, while the lowest rate of (82.7%) is for AE-FUNAI. YouTube is likely used for academic content dissemination, lectures, and student engagement. SlideShare is sparsely used, with the highest adoption rate of (12.9%) by UNIPORT and the lowest adoption rate of (9.3% by FUG. This is very similar to Wikis and Flickr, which suggests that presentation-sharing platforms have low popularity or utility in the university libraries studied.

**Research Question Two:** What are the benefits of using social networking tools in university libraries? The data in Table 4 are used to answer these research questions

**Table 4: Benefits of using social networking tools in Federal University Libraries**

| BENEFITS | | UNIVERSITIES | | | | | | | | | | | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | RESPONSE | FUG | | FUD | | FULAFIA | | AE-FUNAI | | FUOYE | | UNIPORT | | | |
| | | N0 | % | N0 | % | N0 | % | N0 | % | N0 | % | N0 | % | | |
| Library news | Yes | 51 | 94.4 | 69 | 95.8 | 53 | 88.3 | 48 | 92.3 | 77 | 92.8 | 81 | 87.1 | 379 | 91.5 |
| Dissemination | No | 3 | 5.6 | 3 | 4.2 | 7 | 11.7 | 4 | 7.7 | 6 | 7.2 | 12 | 12.9 | 35 | 8.5 |
| Promotion of | Yes | 54 | 100 | 70 | 97.2 | 56 | 93.3 | 49 | 94.2 | 77 | 92.8 | 91 | 97.8 | 397 | 95.9 |
| Resources and Services | No | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2.8 | 4 | 6.7 | 3 | 5.8 | 6 | 7.2 | 2 | 2.2 | 17 | 4.1 |
| Increased | Yes | 46 | 85.2 | 66 | 91.7 | 53 | 88.3 | 44 | 84.6 | 71 | 85.5 | 87 | 93.5 | 367 | 88.6 |
| User | No | 8 | 14.8 | 6 | 8.3 | 7 | 11.7 | 8 | 15.4 | 12 | 14.5 | 6 | 6.5 | 47 | 11.4 |
| Engagement | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Feedback and | Yes | 47 | 87.0 | 64 | 88.9 | 49 | 81.7 | 48 | 92.3 | 72 | 86.7 | 88 | 94.6 | 368 | 88.9 |
| Communicati | No | 7 | 13.0 | 8 | 11.1 | 11 | 18.3 | 4 | 7.7 | 11 | 13.3 | 5 | 5.4 | 46 | 11.1 |
| on | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Improved | Yes | 54 | 100 | 66 | 91.7 | 47 | 78.3 | 44 | 84.6 | 79 | 95.2 | 74 | 79.6 | 364 | 87.9 |
| Service | No | 0 | 0 | 6 | 8.3 | 13 | 21.7 | 8 | 15.4 | 4 | 4.8 | 19 | 20.4 | 50 | 12.1 |
| Delivery | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Real-Time | Yes | 38 | 70.4 | 61 | 84.7 | 43 | 71.7 | 43 | 82.7 | 65 | 78.3 | 72 | 77.4 | 322 | 77.8 |
| Updates and | No | 16 | 29.6 | 11 | 15.3 | 17 | 28.3 | 9 | 17.3 | 18 | 21.7 | 21 | 22.6 | 92 | 22.2 |
| Alerts | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Source: Compiled by the Author

Data in Table 4 assessed the derived benefits of using social networking tools in University Libraries in Nigeria. Results indicated that social networking tools are relevant in university libraries as they were used for different purposes. As indicated in Table 4, social networking tools were principally used in the university libraries for the promotion of resources and services, with 397 (95.9%) affirmation across the sampled universities. It can be inferred that libraries widely use SNTs for marketing their collections, databases, events, and services. According to Ali and Jabeen (2023), most university libraries use platforms like Facebook and Twitter to promote new arrivals, services, and events. Similarly. Mabweazara and Zinn (2016) emphasised that social networking tools used in libraries are skewed toward outreach and resource promotion, including the dissemination of library news. Hence, Table 4 also revealed the use of SNTs for library news dissemination with 379 (91.5%) affirmative responses. It is important to note that almost all universities reported a high benefit in using SNTs for disseminating library news. This finding is in line with the benefits of using SNTs, which are regarded as one of the most highly effective tools for reaching users quickly and broadly with announcements and updates. Also, feedback and communication (88.9%) is another benefit recognised by the respondents, possibly due to its ability to facilitate two-way communication,

allowing libraries to gather opinions and improve services. Comparatively, the highest responses came from UNIPORT (94.6%) and the lowest support from FULAFIA (81.7%).

This finding is supported by Ifijeh and Yusuf (2020), noting that social networking tools foster user-librarian communication, feedback gathering, and personalised services. In the same vein, Oyekale (2024) opined that social networking platforms facilitate active user participation in service design and delivery. Increased User Engagement (88.6%) was also agreed by respondents as a benefit of using SNTs in the university libraries. Yadukrishnan, Kumar & Ihejirika (2023) in a proposed framework revealed that social media integration in libraries enhances user participation and engagement, especially when libraries share multimedia content and adopt strategic planning. Engagement tools like polls, comments, and direct messages have enabled interactive communication with users. Using SNTs for improved service delivery is another benefit, as agreed by the respondents with 364(87.9%). This finding is supported by Al-Daihani and Al-Awadhi (2020), who revealed that social media tools enable libraries to interact directly with users by sharing updates about new resources, engaging in conversations, and responding quickly to questions via comments or messaging, which can help to improve accessibility to services like reference services, resource sharing, and current awareness. FUG, for instance, agreed 100% to this benefit, while FULAFIA (78.3%) and UNIPORT (79.6%) respectively. Last but not least are real-time updates and alerts, with 322 (77.8%) agreeing to it as one of the benefits associated with the use of SNTs in university libraries.

This finding is consistent with a recent study by Arinola *et al.* (2025) that reviewed tertiary institution libraries in Nigeria, where users and librarians recognised that social networks help deliver fast feedback, promote services cost-effectively, enable anytime-, anywhere assistance, and send immediate alerts about programs or new acquisitions. The ability of SNTs to provide real-time updates and alerts is useful for time-sensitive information, as patrons expect timely updates. Real-time updates help users discover resources and events they would otherwise miss. Platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram are central to enhancing user participation, sharing digital literacy content, distributing announcements, and fostering student–library interaction in real time (Anwar & Zhiwei, 2020). This benefit, despite being very important, seems to have relatively lower agreement, possibly due to inconsistent SNTs usage or limited infrastructure. The institution with the highest responses is FUD with (84.7%), while the lowest response came from FULAFIA with (71.7%). Therefore, the results suggest that social networking tools are widely seen as beneficial by university libraries in Nigeria, particularly in promoting services and engaging users. However, libraries may need to strengthen strategies around real-time updates and alerts to fully leverage SNTs' potential.

**Research Question Three:** What are the challenges associated with the utilisation of social networking tools in Federal University Libraries in Nigeria? The data in Table 5 are used to answer these research questions.

**Table 5: Challenges associated with the utilisation of social networking tools in University Libraries in Nigeria**

| CHALLENGES | UNIVERSITIES | | | | | | | | | | | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| CHALLENGES | FUG | | FUD | | FULAFIA | | AE-FUNAI | | FUOYE | | UNIPORT | | | |
| | N0 | % | N0 | % | N0 | % | N0 | % | N0 | % | N0 | % | N0 | % |
| Lack of Institutional Support | 47 | 87.0 | 49 | 68.1 | 43 | 71.7 | 39 | 75.0 | 64 | 77.1 | 57 | 61.3 | 299 | 72.2 |
| Digital Illiteracy | 32 | 59.3 | 39 | 54.2 | 35 | 58.3 | 18 | 34.6 | 31 | 37.3 | 38 | 40.9 | 193 | 46.6 |
| Inadequate Funding | 38 | 70.4 | 37 | 51.4 | 31 | 51.7 | 29 | 55.8 | 48 | 57.8 | 59 | 63.4 | 242 | 58.5 |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Privacy and Security Concerns | 35 | 64.8 | 36 | 50.0 | 32 | 53.3 | 30 | 57.7 | 46 | 55.4 | 51 | 54.8 | 230 | 55.6 |
| Inadequate Power Supply | 29 | 53.7 | 38 | 52.8 | 31 | 51.7 | 40 | 76.9 | 44 | 53.0 | 48 | 51.6 | 230 | 55.6 |
| Inadequate computers | 19 | 35.2 | 30 | 41.7 | 17 | 28.3 | 41 | 78.8 | 38 | 45.8 | 59 | 63.4 | 204 | 49.3 |
| Lack of clear policies | 21 | 38.9 | 32 | 44.4 | 25 | 41.7 | 23 | 44.2 | 29 | 34.9 | 33 | 35.5 | 163 | 39.4 |
| Poor Internet Infrastructure | 42 | 77.8 | 44 | 61.1 | 39 | 65.0 | 32 | 61.5 | 59 | 71.1 | 54 | 58.1 | 270 | 65.2 |

Source: Compiled by the Author

The study also revealed challenges affecting the effective utilisation of social networking tools in federal university libraries, as shown in Table 5. It was found out that lack of institutional support, with 299(72.2%), Poor Internet Infrastructure, 270 (65.2%) and Inadequate Funding, 242 (58.5%) were the most prevalent challenges facing the utilisation of social networking tools in Federal University Libraries in Nigeria. It is pertinent to know that these challenges persist after a couple of years. A study by Uzoagba, Irieguna, and Olise (2020) on the adoption of social media tools for library services in Nigerian university libraries found that, "despite librarians' readiness to engage these platforms, their efforts are hindered by inadequate funding, insufficient ICT infrastructure, erratic power supply, poor maintenance culture, and limited administrative support". An empirical study conducted in Zimbabwe by Chiparausha, Onyancha and Ezema (2022) reflects similar concerns, though librarians were open to social media use, but flagged with inadequate infrastructure, minimal staffing support, and limited institutional resources as major constraints.

Over the years, the absence of commitment, encouragement, or strategic backing from university management or library authorities towards the use of social networking tools has hindered the effective utilisation of SNTs in university libraries in Nigeria (Uzoagba et al., 2020). Hence, lack of institutional support is a major barrier to the effective use of social networking tools. Similarly, poor internet bandwidth, unstable connectivity, and limited access to ICT resources as major factors limiting the use of online tools, including social networking platforms (Ani & Ahiauzu, 2022). Poor internet infrastructure as a major challenge facing the utilisation of social networking tools is strongly supported by Ren, Zhu, and Liang's (2024) study, which revealed the effects of poor internet infrastructure to include unreliable access to stable, high-speed internet services, which are essential for real-time engagement through social networking tools. These may prevent reliable access to digital educational and collaborative resources, thereby limiting opportunities for real-time digital engagement and social connectivity (Ren, Zhu & Liang, 2024).

On the issue of inadequate funding, Uzoagba et al. (2020) study, while discussing the interplay between funding, training, and ICT service effectiveness, noted that without adequate funds, libraries cannot afford the ICT infrastructure, such as stable internet, devices, or invest in staff training on social media tools, which limits adoption and expertise. The importance of funding cannot be overemphasised, as inadequate funding creates a chain reaction: poor infrastructure, limited training, low-quality engagement, as well as reduced effectiveness of social networking tools.

Privacy and security concerns and inadequate power supply were also regarded as challenges affecting the utilisation of social networking tools in libraries, with 230 (55.6%) twin responses. Studies have highlighted that privacy and security concerns, along with inadequate power supply, are significant challenges affecting the utilisation of social networking tools in libraries in Nigeria (Uzoagba et al., 2020; Nduka, 2021; Arinola et al., 2025). According to Uzoagba et al. (2020), privacy and security concerns stem from the

potential risks of data breaches, identity theft, and unauthorised access to personal information, which can undermine user trust and deter engagement with library services. The study further identifies privacy concerns related to users' data protection and confidentiality, alongside power supply instability, as key factors impeding social networking tools utilisation. Inadequate computers were also regarded as another challenge, with 204(49.3%) responses. This is closely followed by digital Illiteracy, 193 (46.6%) responses, while the least recorded is lack of clear policies, with 163 (39.4%) responses. Surprisingly, these three challenges recorded below 50% which could be inferred to mean that they were not regarded as major challenges affecting the utilisation of social networking tools in the libraries. Ifijeh and Yusuf (2020) in a similar study noted that "despite the absence of formal social media policies in many libraries, utilisation of social networking tools was still active and growing, implying that policy clarity was not a decisive factor limiting use". Therefore, the present study did not find inadequate computers, digital Illiteracy and lack of clear policies as challenges to social networking tool utilisation.

However, comparatively, FUG appears to have the highest frequency across many challenges, suggesting it may face broader or more entrenched issues, while AE-FUNAI ranks highest in inadequate computers and power supply, highlighting hardware and energy limitations. UNIPORT, while facing funding and inadequate computer issues, reported lower percentages for institutional support and digital illiteracy, suggesting some advancement in managerial and human capital areas.

**Conclusion**

This study explored how librarians in Nigerian Federal Universities use social networking tools to enhance library services. It focused on platforms like Facebook, WhatsApp, YouTube, Twitter, LinkedIn, blogs, and others for promoting resources, sharing information, and engaging users. Results showed that Facebook, WhatsApp, YouTube, Instant Messaging, Twitter, and LinkedIn were the most commonly used, while Flickr, Slideshare, and Wikis were rarely utilised. Facebook had the highest and most consistent use across institutions, whereas Wikis were largely underused. Twitter usage varied significantly, with AE-FUNAI showing strong engagement, unlike FULAFIA, where it was minimally used, indicating differing priorities. Overall, social media was found useful for publicising services, disseminating news, receiving feedback, and facilitating communication. Key barriers to effective use included poor internet infrastructure, insufficient funding, and a lack of institutional support. Interestingly, issues such as a lack of computers, digital illiteracy, and unclear policies were not seen as major obstacles in any of the universities studied.

**Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made to enhance the utilisation of social networking tools in Federal University Libraries in Nigeria:

1. The management of federal universities should recognise social networking tools as vital components of modern library services and provide adequate institutional support. This may include formulating policies, integrating social media use into library strategic plans, and encouraging staff to actively adopt these platforms for service delivery.
2. Since poor Internet connectivity was identified as a major barrier, federal universities should prioritise the provision of reliable, high-speed Internet services in libraries. This will ensure that librarians and users can access and engage with social networking tools effectively.
3. Adequate financial resources should be allocated to university libraries to support the adoption and continuous use of social networking tools. Funding should cover costs related to subscriptions, staff training, promotional campaigns, and digital content development.

4. While Facebook, WhatsApp, YouTube, and LinkedIn are widely used, less popular tools such as Wikis, Slideshare, and Flickr should be explored. Training and awareness programs can help librarians and users understand the potential of these platforms for knowledge sharing, collaborative learning, and archiving. Repetition aligns meaningful repetition.
5. To address the disparities in usage, such as the low adoption of Twitter in some institutions, federal universities should share best practices and encourage peer learning among librarians. Inter-university workshops and collaborative projects could promote more balanced and uniform usage of social networking tools.

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