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**Use of Social Media Platforms in Disseminating Information amid
COVID-19 pandemic in Technical University Libraries in Ghana**

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ABSTRACT

Educational institutions have undergone tremendous changes through the usage of technology-based applications. Academic libraries however have not been left out of this transition since the libraries are instituted in the university and the heart of the institution. The study aimed to examine social media use to disseminate information amid the Covid-19 pandemic in Technical University libraries. A qualitative research approach was used with semi-structured interviews used to collect data from ten participants. The findings revealed that most of the participants made use of social media like Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, and WhatsApp to disseminate information during the pandemic in both libraries studied. Also, social media helped make the libraries studied visible to the world at large. Inadequate funding, slow internet connectivity, and inadequate ICT infrastructure hindered the effective use of social media platforms as well as users accessing information during the Covid-19 pandemic. It was recommended that the Management of the parent universities provide the necessary infrastructure as far as ICT is concerned for libraries to function efficiently and effectively in their line of duty to support scholarship, teaching, learning, and research work as they cannot function effectively without adequate provision of IT tools.

Keywords: Social Media Platforms, Academic Libraries, COVID-19, Technical University, Ghana.

Introduction

Educational institutions have undergone tremendous changes through the usage of technology-based applications (Akussah & Ahenkorah-Marfo (2016); Benard & Dzandza (2018), Akussah Asante and Adu-Sarkodie (2015)). Academic libraries, however, have not been left out of this transition since the libraries are instituted in the university and the heart of the institution (Gyure, (2008)). The main objective of the library is to collect, process, organize and disseminate relevant information to support teaching, learning, research, and scholarship to assist the parent university in achieving its goals. Library of Congress in the United States in 1990 piloted the digitization of its collection and later launched to become American Memory Historical Collection (Sharma (2009) and Kleymeer Kleinman & Hanss 2010)).

The academic libraries fraternity has therefore seen a significant transformation over the years right from collection development to service delivery. Irrespective of one's location, the revolt of the internet and ICT facilities have transformed the world of information concerning the collection, processing, preservation, and speed of disseminating and accessing information (Kleymeer Kleinman & Hanss, (2010); Mingle & Adams, (2015)). Little did one imagine that a tool (internet) developed for the U.S. military will be a significant source of knowledge, communication, and many more (Ahmed & Qazi, (2011)). One prominent web-based technology globally that cannot be talked about is social, media platforms. The advancement of social media has cut across all aspects of personal, social, economic, and professional human life, transforming, and impacting both positively and negatively on communication, learning, dissemination, and research as well as education (Aghazamani, (2010); Benard & Dzandza, (2018) and Ayiah & Kumah, (2011); Mingle & Adams 2015 and Akussah, Asante & Adu-Sarkodie, (2015)).

Most academic libraries took the advantage of modern-day students who spend more time on social platforms in disseminating information and delivering services in the university community (Ayiah & Kumah, (2011); Ahenkorah-Marfo & Akussah (2016) and Jeyaraj, (2021)). The outbreak of the pandemic somewhere in December 2019 started in Wuhan, China, and gradually spread over the world. This later made human activities, as well as educational institutions, closed (UNESCO IBE, (2020); Asare et. Al, (2020)).

Universities that found it difficult in this transition were forced and bent to shift to the new normal (Jeyaraj (2021); Ahenorah-Marfo & Akussah and Asante & Adu-Sarkodie, (2015)). Most traditional and technical universities utilized many learning management systems

where University of Ghana sort for Sakai, Accra Technical University used MyATU LMS and KsTU made use of Moodle LMS just to mention a few (University of Ghana website 2017, ATU website 2020, and KsTU,2020).

It is in this sphere that social media platforms became more relevant as far as dissemination of information and library services delivery are concerned in order to become relevant and continue to support teaching, learning, scholarship, and research work in the academic domain amid COVID-19. Many traditional universities are known for using these modern platforms (Adewojo & Mayowa-Adebara, 2016) whereas Technical Universities cannot be left talking about it. However, it is the transition from Polytechnics into Universities status that has made almost all Technical Universities bent on following the new trend using the social media platforms in their libraries.

Problem statement

As academic libraries do not only provide information through prints and electronically, but they also serve patrons in the academic institution with web-based channels. These web-based channels are rapidly finding their grounds in information dissemination as well (Quadri & Adebayo-Idowu, (2016). Social media usage in academic libraries has become a household web-based tool used lately.

It was observed in Indonesia that about 27% of library users access social media platforms (Rachman & Putri 2018). Kibugi (2013) indicated as far back 2013 that academic libraries came to the realization of social media usage in the dissemination of information in Kenya's academic libraries. However, a study conducted in Ghana by Mensah & Onyanha (2021) depicted that the use of social media platforms is slow, and unplanned in Ghanaian academic libraries. It is on this note that the researcher intends to investigate the topic under study and the purpose is to find out how Accra and Kumasi Technical University libraries in Ghana, used social media platforms in disseminating information and service delivery amid the Covid-19 pandemic.

Objectives of the Study

1. To find out how social media platforms are used by both Accra and Kumasi Technical University libraries.
2. To identify the possible barriers to effective access and use of social media in information dissemination in both Accra and Kumasi Technical University libraries.

Literature Review

Social Media Platforms in academic libraries

Numerous academic libraries are using social media platforms to connect and reach out to patrons in different communities rather than remaining in the usual building globally (Harrison, Burrell et. al 2017; Blummer & Kenton, 2019; Quan-Haase & Mendes, 2021).

Social media is defined by Seufert et. al (1999) cited in Ayiah & Kumah (2011) as knowledge-based networking as signifying several people, resources, and relationships among them who are assembled to accumulate and use knowledge using knowledge creation and transfer processes to create value. Social media is defined by Oxford Languages as an application and website that allows individuals to create and share content (Mitkov, 2022). It is of this view that academic libraries sought in modern times to disseminate information as well as deliver services to their clientele. The platforms that most academic libraries use in disseminating information include Facebook, Twitter, Youtube, Web 2.0, LinkedIn WhatsApp, and many others (Sandler et. al, 2018).

Etebu (2010) cited in Olubiyo & Olubiyo (2022) stated that the Provision of ICT in academic libraries enhances information location, collection, storage, retrieval, and dissemination. It has been mentioned in many studies that the application of ICT in academic libraries has changed the paradigm shift making information professionals very responsive in their line of duties as facilitators instead of providers as stated by (Ghuloum, 2012) in India. It was indicated by Silva et. al (2013) and Ofodile& Ifijeh (2013) affirmed by Akrofi & Antwi (2020) useful and effective ICT has supported service delivery and information dissemination as well as their line of duty.

Traditional library processes and structuring, however, could no longer satisfy and respond fast enough to an environment that is already saturated by technology, hence it becomes

imperative to adopt online social networking tools to deliver library services. According to Ayiah & Kumah (2008), most university libraries in the world have adopted online social networking tools; examples are Yale Science Libraries, Adelphi University Libraries, Carnegie Mellon University Libraries, Cambridge University Library and Norwegian University of Science and Technology Library. In Nigeria, some university libraries that have adopted online social networking are Babcock University, Covenant University, Nnamdi Azikiwe Library University of Nigeria Nsukka, University of Ibadan and University of Ilorin among others. These libraries use the online social networking walls to announce programmes of the library, inform their new and current users of new acquisitions and recent additions to their collection.

The use of OSN in academic libraries is fast gaining prominence. Ayiah & Kumah⁸ confirmed that 75.8 % of the respondents in their study interacted with reference librarians concerning library services on a social network. Corroborating, Chitumbo & Chewe⁹ in their study established that 113 out of 124 respondents indicated that they will support the idea of using social networking tools in library service delivery. According to Toit¹⁰, Facebook and Twitter were adopted and used at the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) Media Libraries to render library service to users. Using OSN in academic libraries will help in meeting some of the needs of potential library users.

Covid-19 and the Roles of academic libraries

As stated by Rafiq et. al, (2020) in their study, library clientele was attended to through almost academic institutions, and their libraries were closed through their web pages, reassigned resources, and many other robust online services in Pakistan and other part of the world. They further emphasized despite barriers to technological devices like slow internet, and the digital divide, the libraries tried to serve their clientele during these hard times. Fasaie (2020) and Martzoukou (2021) also mentioned that academic libraries in Nigeria and other parts of African countries also resorted to online services. The social media platforms such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, Instagram, web 2.0, LinkedIn, YouTube, and others were not only for communication but rather became a useful tool during the pandemic by almost all academic libraries in the world of academia both home and abroad (Rafiq et. al, 2020) & Guo, Yang et. al, 2020). The academic library's role was not only the collection, processing, organizing, and dissemination of information to the university community or the normal

norms, it went further by awareness creation through the dissemination of health-related information, providing information about the developments of Covid-19 as posit by Ali, & Gatiti (2020).

Barriers to effective access and use of social media in information dissemination

Remote library access has made the physical library less important (Ameen & Jabeen 2015). However, they further observed that most academic libraries have not been able to digitize their print resources into electronic due to financial, technological, and human resource barriers that have caused the delay in Pakistan academic libraries. Gabriel & Yusuf (2020) observed in their study that some academic library staff faced the challenge of poor infrastructure, lack of working space and even going to the extent of buying data subscriptions from their pocket when working from home during the pandemic. They went further to recommend a telegram group and institutional repository. The challenge of poor power supply, inadequate ICT infrastructure, lack of funds, and poor internet speed have been the major challenges experienced by most academic libraries in Ghana as asserted by Antwi et. al, (2020) in their study.

The unwillingness of academic librarians to use SMTs was also linked to the difficulty in determining who might the future users be (McCallum, 2015). On the other hand, attracting users to make use of SMT platforms offered by academic libraries was also reported to be difficult (Ayiah & Kumah, 2011). It was noted that students hardly contributed to SNS managed by libraries and the level of their participation is low (Robin, 2008). Ayiah and Kumah (2011) noted that challenges faced by “most of the African academic libraries in the use of SMT are the lack of skilled labour which can be attributed to the few schools available to train academic librarians coupled with the lack of incentives for them”.

The use of SMTs raises a large number of information administrative issues, primarily in the areas of privacy, security, accuracy, and archiving, spanning major issues such as personally identifiable information, security of academic librarians and likewise users’ data and information, and the accuracy of publicly available data. This made Amina and Nwanne (2015) surmise that academic librarians using SMT to promote library and information services should be very careful and mindful of what they post on these platforms because

once content is shared online, it might be very difficult to take it offline again and it will remain there for everybody to see.

Methodology

This paper employed a qualitative research design and a case study type of qualitative research. Accra and Kumasi Technical Universities were selected as cases since the staff gave diverse views freely and have multiple libraries. Subjects for this study are the library staff at the reference library, e-resource, IT support, and the Head Librarian of both Technical Universities libraries. The library staff were chosen because they can best give answers to questions about the topic under study. A semi-structured interview and a guide as well were used for this study. The semi-structured interview was used because it allowed the respondent time to open up about delicate issues. Also, the researcher can compare past and future data. The population of the study is indicated in the table one (1) below.

Table 1: Population of study

Staff Strength	ATU Library	KsTU Library	Total
Head Librarian	1	1	2
Reference Librarian	2	2	4
E-Resource Librarian	1	1	2
IT Support Staff	1	1	2
Total	5	5	10

Presentation of Data Analysis

Findings of the data collected from semi-structured interviews. The total population was ten (10) for the study comprising two (2) head librarians; one from ATU and one KsTU, four (4) reference librarians; two (2) from ATU and two (2) KsTU; two (2) e-resource librarians; one (1) from ATU and one (1) KsTU and two (2) IT support staff; one (1) from ATU and one (1) KsTU. Respondents were represented with codes ATU 1, ATU 2, ATU 3 to 5 and KsTU 1, KsTU 2, and KsTU 3 to 5 due to ethical grounds and anonymity.

The analysis is therefore presented under the following themes:

Background information of respondents

Individual participants were asked about the period they have worked in their respective institutions, their understanding of social media platforms, the training they had in social media platforms, and the need to use social media platforms amid the Covid-19 pandemic. Ten of the participants interviewed with two (2) spending fourteen (14) years, one (1), spending ten (10); one (1), spending thirteen (13) years; one (1) spending nine years (9); one (1) one and a half (1.5) years; one (1) spending one (1) year and one spending twenty-five years (25) at their place of work.

Number of Years in the Current Institution

Participants were asked about the number of years they have been at their current institution.

The findings giving showed the period during which individual respondents spent at their workplace.

KsTU 1 and 2 posit that:

'They have been at their place of work fourteen years now'.

ATU 1 stated that:

'I have been at my current post for thirteen years now'.

ATU 2 also said that:

'I have spent nine years at my present institution'.

ATU 3 also mentioned that:

'I have also spent ten years'.

KsTU 4 also posits that:

'I have been here for the past twenty-three years now'.

Training in Information and Library Services

The participants were asked during the interview if they have had any training as Information and Library Services providers. Almost all the respondents asserted their level of training in information and library service.

ATU 4 stated that:

‘Yes... I have formal education to the Ph.D. level in my line of duty as an information and library service provider’.

KsTU 1 and ATU 1 also asserted that:

‘I even started with Diploma and now pursuing my Ph.D. degree in Information and Library Services...so when it comes to library work, I have experience ...’

‘I also started with Diploma through to the MPhil level in Information and Library Services...I am currently on my PhD studies.’

ATU 5 disclosed that:

‘....For me, I am a computer science-trained person. Had no information and library service training’.

KsTU 2 also indicated that:

‘ ...errrm....I also started with a diploma to the first degree in information studies, I am currently studying Information studies at the master’s level because I love the library profession’.

Explanation of social media platforms

Participants were asked about their understanding of social media platforms and the findings depicted that every individual respondent had a fair idea. This is shown below:

ATU 2 and ATU 3 posit that:

‘Social Media platforms are tools used to interact and receive feedback through videos, text, words, and many others’.

KsTU 3 discussed that:

'...is social platforms that are used to learn, for research and communication'.

Training in Social Media Platforms

Participants were asked if they have any form of training in Social Media platforms. The majority of individual respondents expressed their views, and these are depicted below:

ATU 3, KSTU 3, KsTU 2 and ATU 2 asserted that:

...hmmm...there is no kind of training but one has to learn on his/her own. No one will send you to school to learn. You have to learn on your own.

ATU 1 posits that:

'There is no training in social media ...to my best of knowledge'.

KsTU 4 also stated that:

...there is no training o in social media. You must learn on your own the way things are going because it is mostly used this time and during the pandemic to disseminate information to our clients.

Availability of ICT infrastructure

Under this theme, respondents were asked if their respective libraries have adequate ICT facilities to facilitate the dissemination of information using social media during the pandemic. It was further revealed from the findings that almost all the two libraries have adequate with the help of the establishment of e-resource sections in the libraries. However, KSTU libraries do not have enough ICT facilities since more attention is given to the e-resource section of the libraries. Findings also revealed that both libraries do not have a standby electricity power supply rather the generator or standby power supply available is for the university in general which powers energy or electricity to the whole university when the power turns out. Response gathered on the availability of ICT facilities was handled under the following sub-themes: computerization of the library, stable electricity power supply, stable internet connectivity, barriers that affect effective usage of social media platforms to disseminate information during the pandemic, and functional social media platforms.

Computerization of the library

Participants were asked if their libraries have been computerized. The findings showed that almost the two libraries under study are computerized. However, KsTU's e-resource library is fully computerized whereas the other two libraries (BTech and Adako Jachie are partially computerized.

KsTU 1 discussed that:

'I can say yes. Because the university has set up a full e-resource/research commons where almost all our electronic interaction is done. However, the other two libraries which are the BTech and the Adako Jachie libraries are partially computerized... but we still help our clients with their information needs during the pandemic'.

ATU 1, ATU 3, and ATU 4 also emphasized that:

'In our case, both libraries have been computerized though there is an e-resource section at the BTech library, the reference desks were fantastic in using the social media o reach out to our patrons remotely.... Facebook, WhatsApp, and YouTube were used'.

Functional social media platforms

Participants were asked if their libraries use functional social media platforms in their line of work in their libraries during the pandemic.

ATU 4, ATU 5, KsTU 3, and ATU 4 stressed that:

'....yes....we do have. Since no one was going and coming...the only option to serve our patrons were the Facebook, WhatsApp, and YouTube platforms.

ATU 2 also posits that:

'Yes, ooh. YouTube helped the library very well during the Covid-19 pandemic. Our library utilized the platform.'

Adequate ICT infrastructure

Participants were asked during the interview if their libraries have adequate infrastructure to support social media usage during the pandemic for constant power supply and fast internet connectivity. The majority of the participants gave their opinion in this direction.

KSTU 4 posits that:

‘As for the ICT infrastructure...I will say...They are inadequate. TU 2 also stressed that:

...When it comes to infrastructure....hmmm... it’s somehow inadequate but we are managing with what we have to disseminate information to the university community during the pandemic’.

Electricity

Findings revealed that ICT infrastructure was inadequate. When participants were asked if their libraries have adequate infrastructure in terms of standby power supply in case of power surges, participants’ responses indicate these facilities are inadequate.

KSTU 1, KSTU 3 and ATU 1 emphasized that:

‘....yes we do have a standby power supply so when the lights go off, the power supply is turned on. Lately, there is no power surges unlike previously. The power cut has somehow reduced but when it goes off, we rely on the university plant for power.

ATU 2 also stressed that:

‘Hmmm....in my own opinion, I will say the library has not acquired its standby power supply. It’s for the university...In some cases, power is supplied to the departments that seem important to the university when the power goes off. However, we still try other means to serve our clientele sometimes using our gadgets like phones and tablets.

Fast internet connectivity

According to the findings, it was shown that the internet wasn’t a problem when participants were asked the question about fast internet connectivity. Almost all the participants indicated that the internet connectivity is fast. However, some participants also have challenges with internet connectivity.

ATU 5, ATU 3, KSTU 4 and KSTU 1 asserted that:

.... Internet connectivity is ok.... Even when the wireless becomes slow, there are enough cables that are connected to the PCs.

ATU 2, ATU 1, and ATU 4 discussed that:

'At B-Tech library here...the internet is sometimes slow since we are using the wireless ...and you can imagine how it becomes during the peak period. It wasn't so when the library was in its old state. I think this happened when the library has been refurbished and some of the cable ports have not been fixed. It will be restored in due time since those responsible have come to look at it

.

Usage of social media platforms

According to the findings, it was shown that social media platforms were used diversely to disseminate information during the pandemic. Participants were asked how their libraries used social media handles to disseminate information during the pandemic. The majority of the participants shared their views in diverse ways.

ATU 2, ATU 1, and KsTU 1 discussed that:

'...tutorials oh how to use the OPAC were put on the YouTube platform'. Other relevant information about the pandemic was readily made available on the Facebook platforms. Questions were answered by library staff using WhatsApp and telephone calls.

KsTU 3 said that:

'WhatsApp calls were made to individual patrons relating to their respective information needs'.

Human resource

The head librarians were asked how their respective staff handle social media platforms to disseminate information during the Covid 19 pandemic. The findings, therefore, showed that both libraries use social media platforms in their line of duty in diverse ways. The researcher sought to find out how social media platforms were used to disseminate information during Covid-19.

ATU 4 posits that:

'Some categories of staff can handle social media in their line of duty while some too are in the learning process and others too very good at it. We hope all of us get there someday.'

KsTU 1 also explained that:

'Here in KsTU, is the IT personnel who handle it. However, every staff is encouraged to use the social media platform in their line of duty since they all have social media platform accounts in one way or the other....If they can use Facebook, why can't they transfer the knowledge in their line of work.'

Staff adaption and acceptance to the new normal

According to findings, it was revealed that the majority of the participants in the interview process have been able to adapt and accept the new normal as far as social media platform usage is concerned.

ATU 2, ATU 5, ATU 1, and KsTU 5 identified that:

'We have easily adapted and accepted the change to the new normal. One has to adapt since social media usage has come to stay whether Covid or no Covid. We are looking at its convenience in terms of time.....social media is what we are using this time so everybody must make up their mind to learn how it is been used o....'

KsTU 1, KsTU 4, and ATU 3 also stressed that:

'Basically, social media platforms are used to communicate so it wasn't so difficult for us to adapt and accept the new normal of its usage in our line of work however, one needs to be a bit more skillful officially to disseminate information than the usual 'Facebooking' we have been doing.'

Staff motivation

Participants were asked how motivated they are to bring their best when discharging their duties with the use of social media platforms. The majority of the participants emphasized that they are self-motivated.

ATU 1, KsTU 3, ATU 2, and KsTU 5 stressed that:

'..... You are talking about motivation? hahaha....we do motivate ourselves. Nothing is forthcoming....It is our work and so we must serve our user community.'

ATU 3 emphasized that:

'For me am not motivated'..... Even the shift system the government proposed... wasn't effective since the staff are not many. Some even took their leave that period so those of us who were left behind have to work'.

ICT expertise to handle social media platforms

According to the findings, some participants revealed that there are no skilled men in charge of handling social media platforms as done in certain institutions. Some too said they have the skilled men to handle social medial platforms in their libraries when another question was further asked.

ATU 2, ATU 3 and KsTU 5

'We do not have a dedicated man purposefully for social media platforms. It is the additional task assigned to the IT support person which makes his work voluminous. He goes the extra mile to come to work even on weekends and stays on late in the evening. We should have enough IT personnel in the library, at least two of them. He's been assisted by service personnel who are even not many'.

KsTU 3, also posits that:

'Here...the IT persons handle everything related to social media as well as the e-resource staff'.

Challenges that hinder the effective use of social media platforms

Participants were asked if some challenges hindered the effective use of social media platforms during the Covid 19. It was revealed by most participants that internet connectivity was the major challenge.

KsTU 1, ATU 3, KsTU 2, and ATU 5 also stated that:

'The major challenge is the slow internet connectivity. Since we are on Wi-Fi, it becomes very slow in the afternoons. It sometimes even goes off'

KsTU 3 observed that:

'Here, we have enough cables...Hardly do we use Wi-Fi. The Wi-Fi is used by students when on campus but we the staff, we use more of the cables....'

Discussions of Findings

Availability of ICT infrastructure

ICT facilities have become an essential tool in today's library activities. Information can never be effectively disseminated using social media without leaving away ICT infrastructure. It was revealed that both libraries have functional e-resource libraries making these libraries computerized. KsTU library does most activities relating to electronics in terms of information dissemination. Other libraries come in when the need arises at KsTU as patrons are normally referred to the e-library for assistance while all libraries at ATU undertake every activity in meeting the information needs of the patron within the university community according to the findings. This supports a study conducted by Gama (2013; Ifijeh, 2013) and affirmed by Antwi (2020). According to them, useful and effective ICT has supported service delivery and information dissemination as well as their line of duty. There was also the availability of both cable and wireless internet connectivity in both libraries as indicated by the findings of the study. However, the two libraries talked about the slow speed of internet bandwidth during the peak period when using wireless.

Constant power supply

The findings further revealed that the power supply was a bit ok since there is always a constant power supply from the service providers nowadays. The power surges have been reduced revealed by both university libraries. Anytime there is an interruption, it doesn't take long for the power to come back. Aside from this too although the library hasn't got a standby generator by itself, the university community has a big standby plant that supplies power to the whole university community.

Availability of IT professionals

Findings on this sub-theme indicated that both ATU and KsTU libraries have skilled IT professionals who support IT in both libraries. Though the library staff with information and library service backgrounds are willing and eager to adapt and accept the new normal without any difficulties whereas the IT personnel in both ATU and KsTU libraries too are not hesitant to train those without IT backgrounds and vice versa. This supports a study conducted by Ali & Gatiti (2020) that the academic library's role wasn't only the collection, processing, organization, and dissemination of information to the university community or the normal norms but it went further by awareness creation of awareness through dissemination health-related information, providing information about the developments as far as Covid 19 was concerned this affirms a study by Foo (2002) indicating that knowledge workers as academic librarians play a vital role in the advance way of finding solutions to issues in adapting to the new normal as far as information seeking and dissemination is concerned. This affirms a study as stated in Antwi (2020) Makori 2009; Deodhar & Powdwal 2017; Sivankalai 2020; Rafiq et. al (2020). It was indicated that it is, therefore, necessary for individual information service providers to see the need for IT training despite the parent university assistance not being worth coming to.

Social media platforms used by academic libraries

It was identified in the findings that ATU and KsTU libraries are familiar with and use social media platforms in one way or the other. It was revealed that ATU libraries use more of the youtube in disseminating information as compared to other platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. However, the WhatsApp platform was used somehow but not as compared to youtube. Tutorials on the use of the library OPAC as well as other relevant information were posted on the youtube channel for users to watch. Short videos too are posted on Facebook and Instagram pages as well. On the other hand, KsTU used WhatsApp most where groups are created on WhatsApp, and any relevant information concerning individual patrons is posted on the platforms. It was further revealed that though there are so many social media platforms, other KsTU libraries are about to make use of platforms like youtube, Instagram, and Twitter though Facebook is there not adequately utilized. This supports a study by Harrison et al 2017; Ayiah & Kumah 2011, Collins & Quan-Haase 2021; Howard 2018; Jindal & Khan 2018; Blummer 2019; Ayiah & Kumah, 2011; Barfi 2015; Akeriwa 2015;

Rabatseta et al (2021) indicating the numerous academic libraries utilizing social media platforms globally

Barriers that affected effective access and use of social media in information dissemination

The finding depicted that slow internet speed when using the wireless during the peak period was a major challenge in the BTech library at ATU because the library was under refurbishment, so the internet ports and cables were removed to make way for workers to work. This supports a study by Rafiq et al (2020) despite barriers to technological devices like slow internet, the digital divide, and so on, the libraries tried to serve their clientele during these hard times. KsTU libraries have enough cables so when the wireless becomes slow during its peak period, the cables are used to perform the day-to-day activities of the library.

It was also revealed in the findings at ATU libraries that funds to acquire data on the part of some of the students were challenged as posit by some information and library services staff. It was revealed by the findings that students were complaining about the challenges there went through during the pandemic since data purchase wasn't easy which made not able to access the library virtually. Again most students complained of the challenge to acquire a sophisticated phones, tablets, and IPads. Most students' parents lost their jobs while other parents were complaining about not getting money to buy food to eat let alone buy a laptop and other gadgets when there wasn't any school during the pandemic. On the part of both universities, the cost of data subscription became high when working from home. This support a study by Gabriel & Yusuf (2020) the challenge of poor infrastructure, lack of working space and even going to the extent of buying data subscription from their pocket when working from home during the pandemic.

The findings again depicted that most students had the problem of electronic gadgets to attend lectures online let alone access information. It is argued that students lately use smart and sophisticated phones data acquisition is another challenge. This support a study by Antwi (2020) where it was posit that the challenge of poor power supply, inadequate ICT infrastructure, lack of funds, and poor internet speed have been the major challenges experienced by most academic libraries in Ghana.

Conclusions

Academic libraries of today are becoming more relevant and visible with the utilization of social medial platforms. Social medial platforms became more relevant during the Covid 19 pandemic when academics used them in disseminating information. It has therefore been an eye-opener for academic libraries in technical universities to utilize the social medial platform effectively despite the challenges that come with it. The academic institution must invest much in the acquisition of ICT infrastructure to continue providing and disseminating information to the university community. Technical University Academic libraries must know that promotion is one aspect of marketing that also makes the libraries visible and it is these social media platforms that can make them achieve the objective of promotion. It looks like every individual uses at least one social media and libraries can take advantage of the trend to become more useful to their patrons.

Recommendation

The following recommendations were made based on the findings:

- i. Management of the parent universities must provide the necessary ICT infrastructure for library professionals to function efficiently and effectively in their line of duty to support scholarship, teaching, leaching, and research work as they cannot function effectively without adequate provision of IT tools.
- ii. Information and library services professionals should engage in Continuous Professional Development (CPD) without waiting for the University Management to sponsor them.
- iii. The social media platforms must be used for the purpose it was created than any other social activities.
- iv. Information and library service providers must also take note that as the physical library system has faced off making way for virtual, the staff should develop themselves through training, seminars, workshops as well as webinar series organized by any group despite the affiliation if only it is useful to their line of work and duty.

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