

Exploring the usage of social media in public libraries in Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality, South Africa

Molaodi Margaret Matobako¹

Department of Information Science, University of South Africa, South Africa
margaret.matobako@gmail.com

and

Williams E. Nwagwu²

Visiting Professor, Department of Information Science
 University of South Africa, South Africa
 CODESRA, Senegal,
willieezi@yahoo.com

Abstract

Social media is one of the innovations which expands the option of web-based technologies to meet the needs of library users without access cost to them, and many public libraries in South Africa have embraced this technology. Against this backdrop, the purpose of the study was to examine the use of social media in the 8 public libraries in Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality in South Africa. Mixed-methods approach and a descriptive and case study research designs guided the study. Quantitative data was collected from 264 respondents using a questionnaire, and qualitative data from 16 library officials using an interview schedule. The study revealed that social media applications were used for conventional and web-based services such as Online Public Access Catalogue (WebOPAC), Prolib and Millennium Library Management System and free Internet access. However, lack of training activities, restrictive Wi-Fi access, low bandwidth, poor library officials' attitudes and short time allocation to access the Wi-Fi make it difficult for the library users and officials to fully benefit from the web-based services available and offered by these libraries. Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality libraries should deliberately implement social media platforms, as this will contribute to how effectively their patrons can use and rely on their web-based services and other services. This study has implications to social media research, development and usage in public libraries.

Keywords: social media, public libraries, library services, information access, Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality, South Africa

1. Introduction

The rapid advancement in information and communication technologies (ICTs) has resulted to radical changes in the provision of information services and brought about several options for handling a wide-range of information effortlessly (Thanuskodi 2011:203). As centres for information dissemination, public libraries play crucial roles in promoting the culture of learning and reading in their communities. With the introduction of social media, the means and strategies

1. Molaodi Margaret Matobako is a PhD student in the Department of Information Science at the University of South Africa, South Africa. This paper is revised from her masters dissertation presented at UNISA
2. Williams E. Nwagwu PhD is a visiting professor in the Department of Information Science of the University of South Africa and Head of Knowledge Management in the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa, Dakar, Senegal.

for achieving the promotion of the culture of learning and reading have been expanded and challenged in some circumstances. Therefore, Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality libraries, namely, Mangaung, BP Leinaeng, Trevor Barlow, Lourier Park, Botshabelo, Seloshesha, Fichardt Park and Bainsvlei were compelled to make alternative measures in their web-based services to ensure that users do not only collaborate and share information online in ways previously unavailable, but that this process aligns properly with expected practices (Lihn 2008:630). This is exactly the case in Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality libraries.

The usage of social media in Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality libraries, whether it is for connecting or training the end users, marketing library services, integration, or attracting new features into library websites and information systems, might not always yield the anticipated results because mostly, public libraries are under-resourced in the utilisation of the social media (Merun and Žumer 2011:14). Both the technology and the human resources required to drive the new applications are not as adequate as would be expected.

1.1 Purpose of the study

The aim of this study was to explore the usage of social media in the 8 selected Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality libraries. To attain this aim, the following objectives have been formulated:

- i.* to examine opinions of users on the use of social media in comparison with other library services;
- ii.* to explore the adequacy of computer and training skills of library staff and users in using social media to meet their information needs;
- iii.* to identify the ICTs available in the library;
- iv.* to identify factors that should be taken into consideration in installing web-based services to meet users' needs;
- v.* to examine the benefits and challenges of using social media in the libraries.

2.0 Literature Review

The review is discussed in the next sections.

2.1 Web 2.0 technologies

According to Bawden and Robinson (2009: 2), there is no clear definition of Web 2.0 because it encompasses various tools' sites for information sharing, online social networking and communication. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010: 3) have however defined Web 2.0 as a platform where all users collaborate and participate, and where content and applications are no longer published and created by individuals but all users. Web 2.0 is a second generation of web-based applications and services where the users are also responsible for the content creation and web-based communities such as social networking. According to Merun and Žumer (2011: 13), Web 2.0 is a new standard technology which allows user-centred design, flexible participation, user engagement, constant content change, information sharing, interaction, collaboration and online social services. According to Rehnman and Shafique (2011: 2), Web 2.0 should be regarded as an attitude and not a technology; it is this reason that Web 2.0 is also viewed as a social movement that is community based and socially rich. Web 2.0 is a set of tools and trends that are used when using the Internet, and they are also socio-technological innovations that allow interaction, gathering and sharing of knowledge through practices and experience globally (Rehman and Shafique 2011: 2).

Web 2.0 is creating a new way of information sharing and collaboration which produced a social networking site. However, the definition of Web 2.0 remains unclear because even O'Reilly himself, in 2005, described it as a set of principals instead of a standard (O'Reilly, 2005: 1). Rouse (2006) further explains that social networks have been there as long as civilisations

and societies existed, but it is only recently recognised because of its potential to promote connection of people and organisations in the society

According to Chua and Goh (2010: 204), Web 2.0 application contains mass participation, openness of data and user control of applications because it is seen as a set of ideas that are used in technologies. Merun and Žumer (2011: 14); Hahn (2014) confirmed further that Web 2.0 is the artifice of the plan of O'Reilly Media and MediaLive International companies that promoted a technology conference that was held on the 5th – 7th of October 2004 in San Francisco. Hahn (2014); Rowe, Drew and Dew (2006) further elaborated the fact that Web 2.0 technologies are based on multi-sensory communication, which aims at promoting the usage of the following online social network applications: blogs, RSS, wikis, instant mailing, and emailing, some of which can be useful in the library environment. The Web 2.0 technologies are tools that assist social networks to increase and be effective. Dasgupta and Dasgupta (2009) revealed and mentioned some of the most important components of Web 2.0 for social networks as, folksonomy, communities, file sharing/podcasting, blogging, wikis, and mashups.

Web 2.0 has changed the library user's outlook on the library activities and services. The concept of Web 2.0 has also developed into other disciplines and changed library practices and service delivery. According to Maness (2006); Merun and Žumer (2011: 14), libraries are already moving into Web 2.0, but the move is slow. Merun and Žumer (2011: 14) further elaborated on what Information Tomorrow (2007: 98) has pointed out that libraries have evolved, and Web 2.0 has opened a wide range of possibilities for them. However, even though Web 2.0 services have been integrated within the library field, the challenges remain as some studies have shown that applying Web 2.0 technologies in libraries did not always bring out the desired outcome. Hence, for the usage of Web 2.0 technologies in libraries, regardless of whether it is for communication with users or marketing library services, the most important requirements are to understand the values of the Web 2.0 and how it works.

2.2 Web 2.0 applications in libraries

Web 2.0 applications provide an opportunity for libraries to bridge the geographical distances between them and the communities. Libraries must be present on this cyberspace if they want to satisfy the needs of their techno-savvy users (Boyd and Ellison 2008:211). Mishra (2008) confirmed the submission of Boyd and Ellison (2008:211) by reporting that social networks assist library officials to share information easily with their users and other colleagues. Web 2.0 can be used to perform three major classes of activities in the library: knowledge organisation, knowledge distribution and information communication. Mishra (2008) further described Web 2.0 applications that can be useful in the library environment as Facebook, Twitter, Second Life and MySpace, amongst others.

2.3 Web 2.0 technologies in comparison with other library services platforms

The development of Web 2.0 technologies has influenced the way libraries used to function and render their services. The study conducted by Zickuhr, Rainie and Purcell (2013: 39-40) explained the information of library services in the digital services and emphasised the fact that web-based services influenced how library users access information through an ordinary book on the book shelve in comparison with an electronic books (e-books) accessible on the library computer kiosks or from their gadgets at home. Therefore, it was revealed that the influence affected the library users reading behaviour amongst other activities in the entire library services. The study of Zickuhr, Rainie and Purcell (2013: 39-40) further indicated that libraries are migrating from their normal traditional services (lending and reference services) because of the technological developments within their communities. However, public libraries are still maintaining their standard of providing traditional services for users, who are still relying entirely on them. These types of users prefer and believe in visiting the library to circulate the materials and in-house usage but not the electronic services. Therefore, it is important that public libraries

should undertake serious measures in trying to keep a balance standard to prevent other services from overpowering Web 2.0 technologies related services. Hence, this study aimed at revealing how Web 2.0 technologies compare with other library services and complement each other in Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality libraries.

2.4 Some Web 2.0 features available in libraries

Web 2.0 features provide and allow library users to share information, contribute, post, and search information. Web 2.0 features are regarded as Internet based services that comprise really simple syndicate (RSS), instant messaging (IM), blogging sites, pod casting, social networking sites, wikis, 3D virtual world such as second life, amongs others. (Tripathi and Kamar 2010:195). These tools have a significant and positive impact on the society because library users and officials can use them for personal and professional use. However, their study is confined to understanding the useful features of Web 2.0 at the level of a library. Tripathi and Kamur (2010:195); van Wyk (2011:8) further revealed that the use of Web 2.0 features is increasing at a high rate. Conversely, features such as RSS feeds, blog, IM, Flickr, YouTube, Facebook, etc., are used mostly in the libraries except wikis, which still needs a strong pick up because it is not commonly used like the others.

The Web 2.0 features can be utilised to market outreach programmes and services in the libraries. The literature reviewed by Rehman and Shafique (2011: 2; Tripathi and Kamar (2010:195); van Wyk (2011:8) reveals that these features can assist the library and be used as a marketing tool that may support and also help the libraries to render their services and offer their resources to their library users in a proactive way. Studies have highlighted the way Web 2.0 features can enhance library services. Tripathi and Kamar (2010:195) advocated the use of Web 2.0 by libraries in order to serve the library users better, and to attract potential users.

Muneja and Abungu (2012) revealed the importance of these features in the libraries as: sharing, communication and promotion of service. The use of Web 2.0 features in the library organisation should respond to the type of different online services the community would want to have. It is therefore obvious that libraries have to embrace the use of Web 2.0 features in order to respond to the requests of their users. However, Muneja and Abungu (2012) highlighted the fact that the application of Web 2.0 features in the library environment is demand-driven and not technology-driven as many users envisage. The study further revealed that it is imperative to engage the community and draw up needs analysis in order to identify the needs required in the preparation of Web 2.0 service design and implementation. van Wyk (2011:8) supports the statement outlined by Muneja and Abungu (2012). According to Tripathi and Kamar (2010: 195), the challenges in generic association when using Web 2.0 features in libraries are: lack of support from management, lack of support from information technology development, lack of expertise and factors such as internet connectivity, amongst others.

2.5 Technical support provided by library officials to Web 2.0 library users

It is not easy to expect library officials to be perfect with the new innovation without been properly trained and prepared. According to Bradley (2007: 196 – 198), library officials must be willing to accept and be ready to work with ICT equipment before they can even attempt to use Web 2.0 technologies. It is important to start with marketing the new product extensively to library officials and indicate its benefits and how it is going to make their current job easy (Bradley 2007: 196). Beside library management team, another group of members that is also as important as library officials is technical support team, because they must handle the implementation of the Web 2.0 technologies as pleasurable as possible. This will make it easy for library officials to provide technical support to officials and users.

Information Tomorrow (2007:4); Bradley (2007: 197) agreed that lack of support from the technical team can also jeopardise the effective results of having Web 2.0 technologies in the library. It is a fact that the technical support team doesn't necessarily operate the Web 2.0

technologies because they are designed specifically for end-users (library officials and users). However, their support is needed, especially when ICT equipment is faulty, such as when there is trouble with network lines and service providers. Therefore, trained and skilled library officials can provide adequate training support to the end-users to effectively utilise Web 2.0 technologies in libraries.

Information Tomorrow (2007: 4); Maness (2006) further highlighted the fact that public libraries' users depend on ICT gadgets like mobile devices for communication, collaboration, interaction, education and information search, and they request immediate response or support. The users therefore depend on equipped and trained library officials to assist them to know how to use these gadgets, especially those that exist in the libraries (Information Tomorrow 2007: 4).

Aird *et al.* (2015), and Dasgupta and Dasgupta (2009) agreed with Information Tomorrow (2007: 4) by revealing that libraries use Web 2.0 technologies to fulfil a range of objectives and they are focusing on promoting library resources and services to their users, hence, they are regarded as a platform for collaboration. According to Tripathi and Kama (2010: 195), there are Web 2.0 tools that can be used to offer technical support, especially to library users, in order to promote the service. Library blog, RSS feeds, etc. can be created and used as a platform to guide the users on how to use Web 2.0 technologies in a particular library.

Bradley (2007: 196) highlighted the importance of training all the beneficiaries of ICTs in the library. The library and information services unit have to introduce various kinds of scheduled training programmes that would cater for unskilled library officials. In such situations, the intervention of library officials through training can determine the benefits and pitfalls of access to Web 2.0 technologies by library users and deploying the technologies to meet users' needs.

2.6 Types of ICTs available in libraries

Generally, ICTs are regarded as a combination of telecommunication and computer tools that enables new products and systems to assist people daily; and they are leading in the corporate world. It is a term that is used for any communication device or application device. According to Statistics South Africa (2013: 8), ICTs are important component of the national economy. There are also various types of ICT equipment available in public libraries. Libraries that have adopted the use of ICT for their operations are regarded as been automated.

Chisenga (2004) conducted a survey indicating that in Africa, some public libraries have already introduced a lot of ICT facilities to their users. Therefore, African libraries need to adopt new innovations related to the latest ICT tools, as done by libraries in the developed countries. Islam and Islam ((2007) studied the availability of ICT tools in Africa and Bangladesh and reported that the availability of ICTs in the libraries affects library services and administration positively. We discuss the research methodology in the next section.

3 Methodology

According to Babbie (1989: 75), research methodology is concerned with the specific tasks of the research process such as research design, sampling and data collection, amongst others. This descriptive study employed a mixed method approach and the case study research design. The study sampled the entire 264 population of library users and officials in Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality libraries. The sample comprises 248 library users and 16 library officials. The whole population was used as the sample because it was a small number for data collection. It was assumed that every citizen of Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality was a potential user of the 8 selected libraries in the Free State Province. The study adopted both quantitative and qualitative research methods. These approaches were used in order to assist us to determine the nature of respondents' knowledge of the social media usage and to have an in-depth understanding of the subject (McMillan and Schumacher 2001: 14 – 16). The hand-delivered questionnaires were used for collecting data from 248 library users, while interview schedules were used for 16 library officials from the 8 selected Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality libraries. A total number of 172

(69.3%) library users returned their copies of the questionnaire. The data collected was analysed using SPSS. All the 16 (100%) library staff were successfully interviewed. The recorded one-on-one interviews were transcribed to ensure a word-by-word account. The research findings follow in the next section.

4. Results

Section 4.1 to 4.16 represents the results.

4.1 Response statistics

The results and discussions were organised using the research objectives. Table 1 shows the return statistics for each library in the study. Table 1 also shows that the highest response rate was from Bainsvlei Library with 31 (18.0%) followed by Mangaung library with 28 (16.3%) and Selosesha library with 27 (15.7%). Botshabelo library returned 26 (15.2%) of the questionnaires administered to them. Also, BP Leinaeng Library 24 (13.9%), Trevor Barlow Library 21 (12.2%) and Fichardt Park Library 6 (3.5) and Lourier Park Library 9 (5.2%) returned their copies of questionnaire as indicated.

Locations	Distributed	Returned	%Returned
Bainsvlei	31	31	100
Mangaung	31	28	90.3
Selosesha	31	27	87.1
Botshabelo	31	26	83.9
BP Leinaeng	31	24	77.4
Trevor Barlow	31	21	67.7
Lourier Park	31	9	29.0
Fichardt Park	31	6	19.4
Total	248	172	69.4
Mean	31	21.5	
Standard deviation	0	8.6	

4.2 Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

The study first collected data on the demographic characteristics of the respondents. According to Salkind (2010), demographic information provides data on the characteristics of the participants, and it is essential to determine whether or not the respondents are the representative sample of the target population for generalisation purposes. The age distribution of the respondents in figure 1 shows that a high proportion 79 (45.9%) of the respondents were between the age of 18 - 25 years, followed by 34 (19.8%) who were aged 26 – 34 years, and 23 (13.4%) who were over 51 years. These were followed by 16 (9.3%) of the respondents who were between 35 - 40 years, followed by 14 (8.1%) aged 41 and 50 and the lowest age group was between 13 – 17 years with 6 (3.5%).

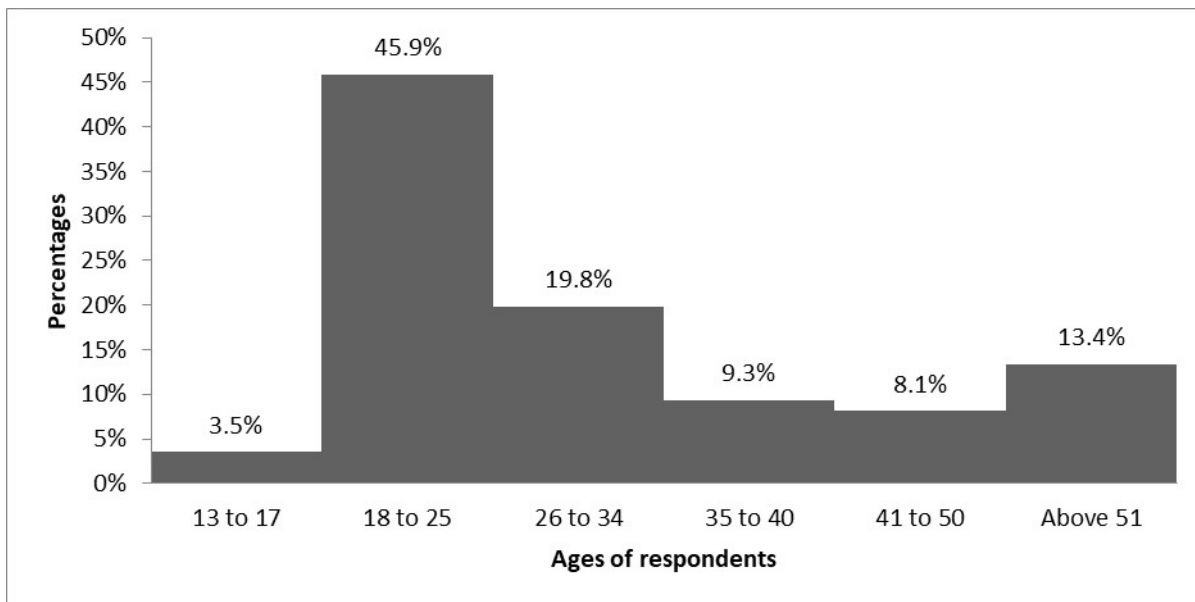


Figure 1: Age distribution of Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality library users

4.3 Opinions of users on the use of social media in comparison with other library services

This section compares other existing library services platforms that are delivered with social media, therefore, the researcher sought to understand the views of library users who are already using the social media in comparison with other existing library services. The most striking factor according to the literature review for the study is the development of web-based services and their subsequent absorption that has influenced the manner in which libraries previously used to function and render their services to users (Zickuhr, Purcell and Rainie 2013: 39-40). The reviewed literature indicated that libraries have developed interest in, and given attention to web-based services in comparison with other library services due to the pressure of technology explosion and the demand from library users (Connaway 2015).

4.4 Library users visiting Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality libraries

Table 2 shows that 86 (50%) of the respondents always (twice a month) visited the libraries, followed by 64 (37%) who did the same only sometimes or every other month, and those who rarely(once a year or less) visited the library were 22 (13%).

Categories	Frequency	%
Always (twice a month)	86	50
Sometimes (every other month)	64	37
Rarely (once a year or less)	22	13
TOTAL	172	100
Mean	57.3	
Standard Deviation	26.5	

Therefore, in terms of visiting the Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality libraries, it is reasonably clear that most of the respondents do utilise the facilities.

4.5 How often do you take out materials on your library card?

Table 3 shows a high proportion, 89 (52%), respondents who take out library materials on library cards always or twice a month. While 48 (28%) take out library materials sometimes or every other month, 35 (20%) respondents take out library materials on library card once a year or less.

Table 3: Frequency of library materials taken out on library card		
Categories	Frequency	%
Always (twice a month)	89	52
Sometimes (every other month)	48	28
Rarely (once a year or less)	35	20
TOTAL	172	100
Mean	57.3	
Standard Deviation	23	

4.6 Library users using Internet in libraries

Figure 2 shows that a large number 113 (66%) of the respondents, indicated that they use Internet in general when they are in the libraries while only 59 (34%) indicated that they do not.

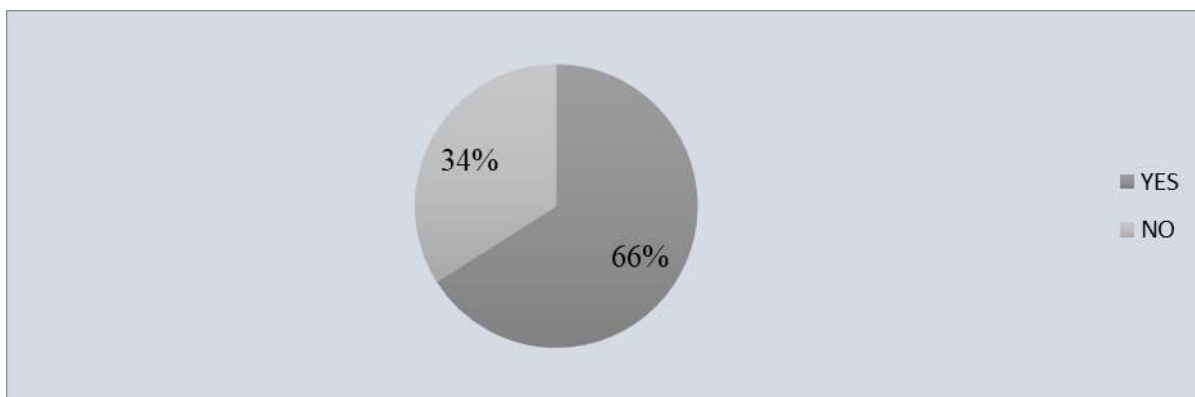


Figure 2 Frequency of Internet usage in (n=8) libraries

Figure 3 shows 100 (58%) of the respondents considering social media in comparison with other existing services as vital while 53 (31%) said that it is an add-on to existing service followed by 19 (11%) of the respondents who indicated that it is a necessary service.

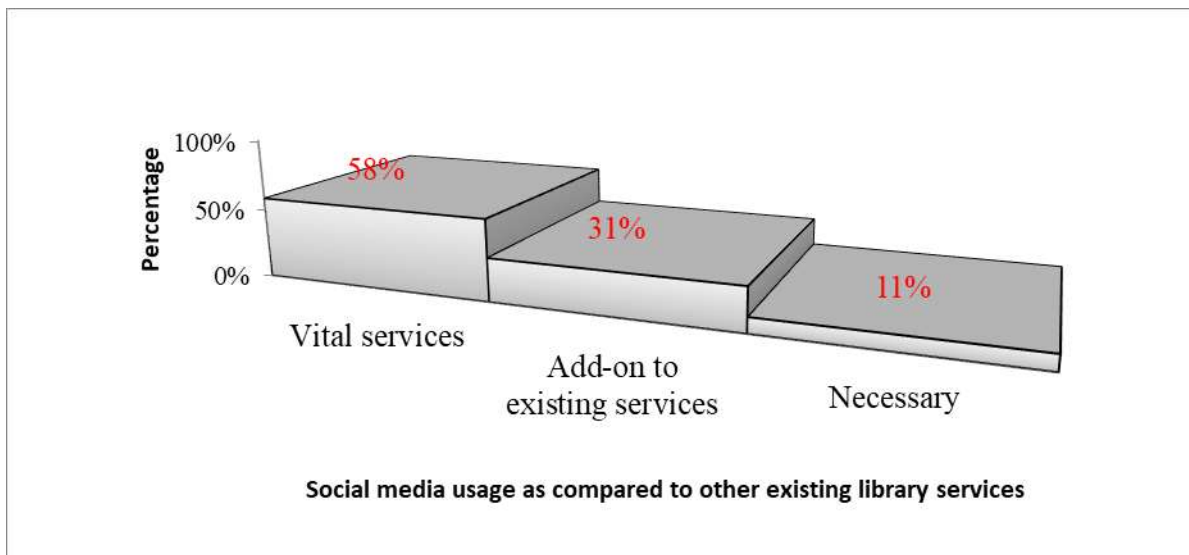


Figure 3: Reflection of social media usage as compared to other existing library services

4.7 The importance of social media availability in 8 libraries

Findings revealed that majority of the respondents, 152 (88%), believe that the availability of social media is beneficial, while the rest, 20 (12%) respondents indicated that it is not beneficial.

4.8 Do these web-based services satisfy and meet library users' information needs in comparison with other library services?

The results revealed that if social media were to be compared to other library services in terms of user's satisfaction, it will meet the needs of a large number, 121 (70%), of respondents while 51 (30%) respondents indicated that their information needs were not met.

4.9 Other reasons for using ICT equipment in the library

Table 4 shows that 55 (32%) of the respondents indicated that they are using ICTs for searching information, 10 (6%) for online job hunting, 5 (3%) for typing documents, 4 (4%) for reading e-books, 2 (1%) for photocopying, 4 (2%) for reading emails, followed by a large number 92 (53.5) of the respondents who did not respond.

If you are not using the social networking sites, what are your reasons for using ICT equipment in the library?		
Reasons	Respondents	%
Information searching	22	12.8
Job hunting	10	5.8
Typing documents	5	2.9
Research	33	19.2
Reading e-books	4	2.3
Photocopying	2	1.2
Reading emails	4	2.3
Did not respond	92	53.5
TOTAL	172	100
Mean	21.5	
Standard Deviation	28.5	

4.9 Opinions of the users on the adequacy of computer and training skills of library staff and users in using social media to meet their information needs

We wanted to know the views of library users on the adequacy of library computers and training skills of library. Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality libraries use Mangaung libraries online catalogue because they are members of the Legal Deposit Consortium of South Africa. Library users were requested to explain the level of skills obtained through training and if library computers were at high standard to meet their information needs. This research concluded that 71 (41%), a large number of the respondents, indicated that they are able to find Mangaung libraries online public access catalogue. The findings of the study also revealed that 63 (37%) of the respondents can perform search by using title, author, subject, shelf number. Fifty-eight or (34%) of the respondents indicated that they are able to tell if an item is “on shelve” or “out”, while 89 (52%) of the respondents, indicated that the library doesn’t have such service. Table 5 show the results of respondents’ skills at using Mangaung libraries online public access catalogue.

Statements	I can do this	%	I cannot do this because I don’t know	%	Library does not have that service	%
Able to find online public access linked to social media	0	0	30	17	89	52
Able to find Mangaung libraries online public access catalogue	71	41	17	11	33	19
Can perform search using Title, Author, Subject, Shelf Number	63	37	42	42	8	5
Able to tell if an item is “on shelve” or “out”	58	34	51	29	8	5
Able to renew library items using Mangaung libraries online public access catalogue	0	0	55	32	57	33

4.10 Library users’ trainings from library officials

Figure 4 shows that 78 (53%) of the respondents agreed that they did get adequate trainings/ skills or support from library officials on how to use computer and the Internet while 68 (47%) didn’t get it, followed by 26 (15%) respondents who didn’t have any opinion.

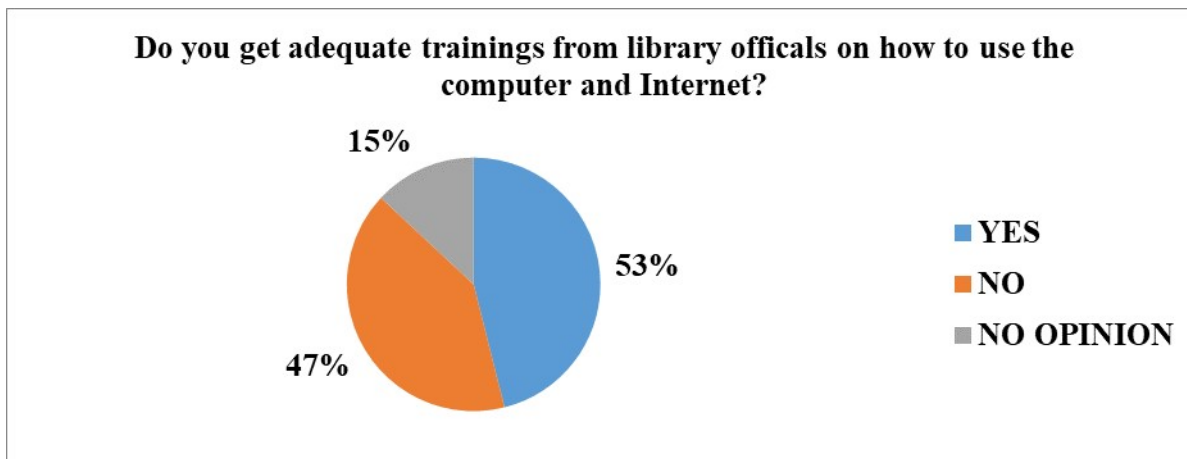


Figure 4: Respondents trainings/ skills or support from library officials

4.11 Library users' ICTs training needs

Table 6 shows that 25 (14.54%) of the respondents requested for training on Microsoft office for typing purposes, 53 (30.81%) basic computer skills, 51 (29.65%) how to use Internet, 7 (4.07%) how to create email account while 36 (20.93%) of the respondents did not respond.

Table 6: Training needs requested by respondents		
Respondents' ICTs training needs		
Training needs indicated	No. of Respondents	Percentages
Microsoft office	25	14.54
Internet search	51	29.65
How to create email account	7	4.07
Basic computer skills	53	30.81
Did not respond	36	20.93
TOTAL	172	100
MEAN \bar{x}	34.4	
STANDARD DEVIATION	17.11	

4.12 ICT equipment available in the library

In this section, library users are requested to identify and name the ICTs that are available and accessible in their libraries, and who they consult if they have technical problems when they utilise them. All Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality libraries have photocopying machines, computers and tablets and free Internet access. This research therefore concludes that all Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality libraries are in line with other libraries nationally and internationally who provide ICTs. However, the findings of the study also revealed that 68 (47%) of the respondents who access ICTs in the libraries depend on library officials for assistance when they encounter problems, while others indicated that they access ICTs at their educational institutions except the libraries because they do not have access to use social networking sites in all Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality libraries. Table 7 shows a large number, 172 (100%), of the respondents, who indicated that Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality libraries have computers with free Internet access, followed by 148 (86%) who agreed that libraries have printers while 9 (5%) did not agree. Table 7 also shows that 172 (100%) of the respondents indicated that the libraries do not have free Wi-Fi, while 172 (100%) indicated that libraries have

photocopy machines, followed by 115 (67%) respondents who responded that libraries have public telephones but 31 (18%) disagreed. 103 or 60% indicated that libraries have scanners, but they are not accessible to users, and 40 (23%) did not agree that scanners are available. Table 7 shows that 106 (62%) of the respondents indicated that libraries have tablets with free Internet access while 45 (26%) disagreed and 97 (56%) indicated that there are no fax machines, followed by 54 (31%) of the respondents who also indicated that libraries do not have the laminating machines.

Table 7: ICTs equipment available in 8 libraries				
ICT that are available in Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality libraries				
Equipment	Yes	%	No	%
Computers with free Internet access	172	100	0	0
Printer	148	86	9	5
Free Wi-Fi	0	0	172	100
Photocopy machine	151	88	0	0
Public telephone	115	67	31	18
Scanner	103	60	40	23
Tablets with free Internet access	106	62	45	26
Other (specify) Fax	0	0	97	56
Laminating machine for users	0	0	54	31

4.13 User experiences

Table 8 shows that a large number, 83 (48%), of the respondents indicated that they use Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn, and 7 (4%) need help, followed by 22 (13%) who never used it. Table 8 also shows that 52 (30%) respondents indicated that they use Wikis, 20 (12%) need help and 32 (19%) never used it. Table 8 shows that 49 (28%) respondents indicated that they use blogs, 24 (14%) need help from other people while 35 (20%) never used it. 43 respondents or 25% indicated that they use Google docs and 27 (16%) need help while 34 (20%) never use it.

Table 8: Respondents level of experience when using social networks						
Social Networks	I can use this by myself		I would need help using this		I have never used this	
	Respondents	%	Respondents	%	Respondents	%
Blogs	49	28	24	14	35	20
Wikis	52	30	20	12	32	19
Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn	83	48	7	4	22	13
Google docs	43	25	27	16	34	20

4.14 Benefits of accessing and using social media by the library users

Empowerment

The results of this study revealed that 98 (57%) of the respondents use social media services in the libraries to empower themselves technologically and to enhance and strengthen the quality of their lifestyle.

Information retrieval

A large number, 149 (87%), of the respondents indicated that information plays an important role in their lives because information can be easily accessible and retrieved online. The learners and students mentioned that they utilise Web 2.0 technologies as research tools to retrieve information easily.

It provides an opportunity of skills and knowledge

The results of the study also revealed that 132 (77%) of the respondents indicated that they have acquired skills and knowledge by doing online job hunting, creating email accounts and curriculum vitae.

Market business online

Thirty-two respondents or 19% indicated that through Web 2.0 technologies, they are able to market their businesses online and the services support the growth of their small businesses

4.14 Challenges of accessing and using social media by the library users

Lack of enough data and low bandwidth

A large number 98 (60%) of the respondents indicated that lack of enough data and low bandwidth make it difficult for them to use social media in some of the Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality libraries.

Lack of Internet search skills

Thirty-eight respondents, or 22%, lamented the fact that lack of Internet search skills delays the process of using it effectively.

Load shedding

Load shedding is a serious challenge in South Africa. It was indicated as one of the challenges by 159 (92%) of the respondents, who said that it is preventing them from accessing web-based services in the libraries.

Lack of enough ICT equipment

The results of the study showed that 151 (87%) of the respondents indicated that lack of adequate ICT equipment in libraries is another challenge that prevent the accessibility of web-based services.

Time allocated to the accessibility of web-based services

A large number, 141 (82%), of the respondents identified the time allocated to the usage of web-based services as one of the challenges.

Library officials' attitude

The results of the study also indicated that library officials' attitude towards users of social media was another challenge. 31 (18%) of the respondents identified that some of the staff members do not want to assist them when they encounter problems with web-based services.

Low level of awareness

63 or 37% of the respondents indicated that they have low knowledge of what social media is all about.

4.15 What should the libraries do to improve use of social media in the libraries?

Trainings

The respondents were given an opportunity to identify any other factor that the libraries should consider when installing web-based services. A large number, 90 (52%), of the respondents identified scheduled trainings before libraries can even consider installing web-based services.

Free Wi-Fi

A large number, 121 (70%), of the respondents identified the non-accessibility of free Wi-Fi which makes it difficult to use web-based services in libraries.

Marketing of web-based services

Marketing also came out high as one of the factors that should be considered when libraries are installing web-based services, as was identified by 25 (15%) respondents, who mentioned that they were not even aware that the 8 Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality libraries have web-based services.

Online public access linked to social media

The results of the study indicated that a high proportion, 111 (65%), of the respondents use online public access catalogue, which was not linked to any social media.

ICT equipment

It was mentioned by 96 (56%) of the respondents that advanced ICT equipment should be installed and made accessible to users.

4.16 :Interview with Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality libraries officials

4.16.1. Library officials' opinions on the adequacy of computer skills and social media level of experience

All 16 (100%) respondents indicated that they had a very good experience of typing, scanning documents, Internet searching, and printing documents, while 2 (12.50%) of the respondents cannot use tablets. The respondents were also asked to indicate the number of years that they were introduced to Web 2.0 technologies; 14 (87.50%) respondents indicated that it was more than 5 years while 2 (12.50%) were still trying to learn. When it comes to experience on social media at their personal level, the results indicated that 14 (93.75%) respondents were more familiar with Web 2.0 technologies such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, WhatsApp, YouTube, Blogs, and Millennium computer system, etc. while 2 (12.50%) of respondents had no interest in Web 2.0 technologies. All respondents, 16 (100%) indicated that whenever they experience ICT problems, they immediately report them to their immediate supervisors who will then contact IT specialists in the IT Department. The respondents were asked to indicate the social media that are accessible and that they use in their libraries. The findings of the study revealed that 13 (81.25%) respondents use emails more often, while 16 (100%) use Millennium library system daily, 11 (68.75%) use the Intranet, 4 (25%) respondents use Facebook followed by 16 (100%) respondents who are use Mangaung online public access catalogue. The study also revealed that 9 (56%) of the respondents use Wikipedia to search for information.

4.16.2 Library officials' demographic, opinions, benefits and challenges on the usage of social media in the library

The information recorded on the demographic profiles of the sampled library officials revealed that male respondents were 5 (31.25%), while females were 11 (68.75%). The respondents were asked if they derive benefit when they use social media services in their libraries. The respondents who answered this question positively were the younger generation. The study revealed that 11 (68.75%) young library assistants indicated that they do benefit, while the remaining 5 (31.25%) indicated that it is a waste of time. The respondents were asked to indicate

the web-based technologies that are accessible and that they use in their libraries. The findings of the study showed that 13 (81.25%) respondents use email applications such as Microsoft Outlook more often, while 16 (100%) use Millennium Library Management System daily, 11 (68.75%) use the Intranet, 4 (25%) respondents use Facebook followed by 100% who are using Mangaung online public access catalogue. The study also revealed that 9 (56%) of the respondents use Wikipedia to search for information.

The respondents were asked to explain whether the web-based services has influenced the flow of information resources in their libraries, 8 (50%) respondents revealed that web-based services has influenced the flow of resources because users can substitute the existing resources with online resources while 7 (43.75%) of the respondents explained that web-based services is a waste of time and it will not facilitate the easy flow of information and replace the resources. 10 (62.50%) respondents indicated that they run out of data within two weeks, after which it becomes difficult for the users to access web-based services. Load shedding was another challenge that the 16 (100%) respondents indicated because web-based services cannot be functional without electricity. Restrictions from using social media were another challenge that was indicated by 14 (87.50%) respondents. A large number 14 (87.50%) of the respondents also indicated that libraries cannot interact, communicate, and market their outreach programmes and services effectively or share information with their users because most of the social networks are blocked. It was indicated that lack of training led the library officials' to be negative towards their users and their work; hence, service delivery will always be affected. A high proportion 11(68.75%) of the respondents explained that library management and or IT Department restricted the usage and access to web-based applications such as social networking sites. Surprisingly, 6 (37.5 %) of the respondents stated that introducing web-based services in the library is a serious challenge because some of the younger generations are addicted to social media applications; they use and access them in the information desk, and that affects provision of information to the community. 10 (62.5%) respondents disagreed with this.

4.16.3 Factors to be considered when installing web-based services in libraries to meet the needs of the users

All the 16 (100%) respondents indicated that unlimited access to social media should be granted to library users. They also mentioned that free Wi-Fi should be installed to attract new and old library users. All the 16 (100%) respondents emphasised the fact that libraries must compete with other organisations where Wi-Fi is easily please, clarify. Printing facilities must be available so that the users can be able to type and print their documents. It was also recommended by all the 16 (100%) respondents that they must be equipped with advanced ICT equipment that will make service delivery easy. They also indicated that the training of staff and the marketing of web-based services must be done in advance; before the services can be implemented in the libraries.

5. Conclusions

The analysis of both the qualitative and quantitative data, collected from questionnaire and interviews, revealed the following:

1. Social media services in comparison with other library services

Most of the respondents generally use the Internet, visit the libraries always or twice a month and take out materials using library cards. The findings also show that respondents utilise library online public access catalogue and wish that libraries can create online public access catalogue that is linked to their social media for them to participate in the development of the libraries. Some of the respondents considered the availability of Web 2.0 services as a vital service in comparison with other existing library services. The findings further showed that Web 2.0 services satisfy and meet their information needs in comparison with other library services.

6. Views of library users on the adequacy of library computers and training skills of library officials'

Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality libraries use Mangaung libraries online catalogue because they are members of the Legal Deposit Consortium of South Africa. The study revealed that many of the sampled respondents do not use Mangaung libraries online catalogue because they do not know that the libraries have that service. Further, the respondents who can use it can search item by title, author or subject and they can tell if an item is "on shelf" or "out" or "on hold". A large number of the respondents indicated that they do not have basic computer skills due to lack of structured training by the libraries. Hence, they requested the following training programmes: use of Microsoft Office, Internet search, how to create email account and basic computer skills so that they can be in the position to utilise the Web 2.0 technologies effectively to meet their information needs.

7. Types of ICTs available in the libraries

All 8 Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality libraries have photocopying machines, computers, tablets and free Internet access and in line with other libraries, nationally and internationally, who provide ICTs and Web 2.0 features. However, most of the respondents who access ICTs in the libraries depend on library officials for assistance when they encounter Web 2.0 features problems, while others indicated that they access ICTs and Web 2.0 features at their educational institutions except the libraries because they do not have access to use social networking sites in all of the 8 Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality libraries.

6. Aspects to be considered when installing web-based technologies in libraries

Most of the respondents indicated that structured trainings, uncapped free Wi-Fi, marketing of library web-based services, adequate budget allocation, training of staff, online public access catalogue linked to social media and ICT equipment are to be taken into consideration when installing Web 2.0 to meet the users' needs. The respondents also recommended that libraries should operate as information hub and a safe environment where users can access and utilise Web 2.0 technologies to their advantage at any time.

5 Benefits and challenges of accessing social media in libraries

The availability of Web 2.0 technologies in Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality libraries is beneficial for library users as it empowers them technologically, enhances and strengthens the quality of their lifestyle, plays an important role in their lives because information can be easily accessible and retrieved online, provides an opportunity of gaining skills and knowledge and offers online entrepreneurship opportunities. However, we found that there are also challenges that hampered the effectiveness of the Web 2.0 services in the Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality libraries. These are: lack of data, low bandwidth, lack of Internet search skills, load shedding, lack of enough ICT equipment, time allocated for the accessibility of web-based-services and poor library officials' attitude to library services. The respondents suggested that management of the libraries should investigate the reasons that make staff members unfriendly attitude and deal with the problem with immediate effect because it will affect the library services to meet users' information need.

Conclusively, regardless of the challenges, the respondents benefit from accessing free web-based services in Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality libraries, and this positively impacts the use of social media and meets the users' needs in comparison with other library services. Despite the fact that these libraries do not offer structured training and have restrictions on the usage of other social media applications, the study concludes that most of the respondents can use and have knowledge of ICT equipment while others still rely on the library staff for assistance.

Based on the findings, it is recommended that the libraries expand their Internet bandwidth to prevent library users from waiting for long when they use social media. This will also enable

more library users to access ICT equipment as well. Furthermore, the library management should have proper marketing strategies in place to promote the web-based services internally and to their communities. The Library management should also ensure that funds are made available to procure ICT equipment that will be enough to cater for more library users. In addition, the library management should introduce structured training programmes for their staff who will then be in the position to assist and train the library users. Also, the time allocated for library users should be extended from 1 to 2 hours to give users enough time to access information. Finally, the library management should consider having alternative power supply systems to be used during power failure as well as considering programmes that can run offline so that library services can still be accessed without being interrupted during power failure. This study has implication to social media research , development, access and use in public libraries in South Africa and perhaps elsewhere with similar challenges.

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