An investigation into the use of social media based services at the Uganda Christian University

Library, Mukono, Uganda.

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Social Media

Definitions

- Any platform; that provides facility for sharing ideas, exchanging information and sending messages over an electronic medium (Goyal, 2013).

- A method that supports a platform for online transmission of information (Edosomwan, 2011).

- Technologies or applications that people use in developing and maintaining their social networking sites (Albarran 2013)

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Reviewed literature

Social media platforms include; Wikis, Blogs, MySpace, Facebook, Flickr, You Tube, Twitter, WhatsApp. Instagram.

Social media is used for:

• Dissemination of health information (Adults in the USA) (Signorini et al., 2011, Moorhead, 2013)

• Online marketing (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010, Lipsman et al., 2012)

• Advertising and marketing (Ho et al., 2015, Chen and Chen, 2015)

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Reviewed literature cont'd…

• Human resource management (recruitment) (Caers and Castelyns, 2011, Ollington and Harcourt, 2013)

• Political fronts (Ifukor, 2010, Udanor et al., 2016)

• Promoting environmental awareness (Bruns et al., 2011, Scholtz et al., 2017)

• Education and research arena (Peterson and Dover ,2014 , Ngai, 2015, Scholtz et al., 2017)

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Purpose, Objectives

Purpose: To investigate in to the use of social media based library services at UCU and to come up with strategies for implementing the use of social media based library services at UCU library.

Objectives:

❖ Identify social media tools that can be adopted to support social media based library services.

❖ To assess library staff and user perceptions and attitudes towards social media based library services at UCU library.

❖ Identify the benefits and challenges of implementing social media based library services at UCU library services.

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Research Questions

Research question

• To what extent have UCU Library services embraced the use of social media for library service delivery?

Sub- questions

• What social media tools are currently being used for the provision of library services at UCU library?

• What social media based library services are needed by UCU library users?

• What are the benefits of using social media library based services at UCU library?

• What are the challenges faced by UCU library and its users in providing and using social media based library services?

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Significance

- Draw lessons from research findings for UCU library

- Guide users on meaningful use of social media based library services.

- Application of findings for other universities willing to implement social media based library services.

- Educate librarians about social media based library services delivery in university libraries.

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Methodology

Research design: Study applied a case study design

Justification: Researcher wanted to obtain an in depth understanding of use of social media based library services in the UCU library

Sampling: Study purposively sampled 22 undergraduate students,8 postgraduate students and 10 library staff.

Data collection methods: Questionnaire

Data analysis: Used interpretative methods. Data was transcribed in to written text by sorting and coding general patterns and categories.

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Major Findings

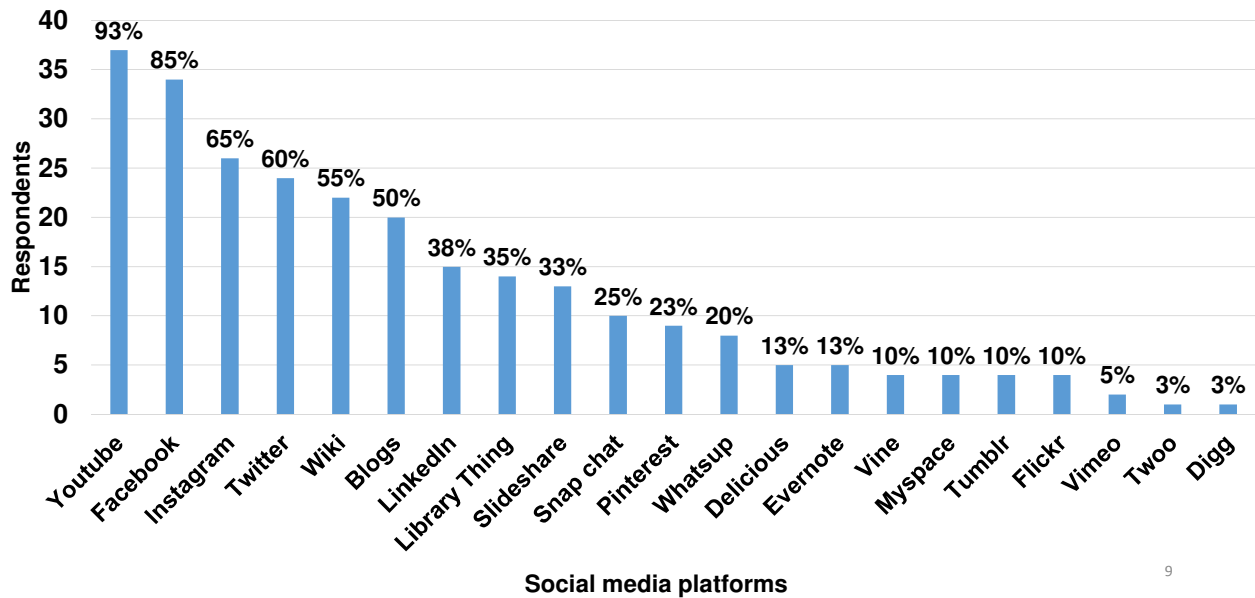### Figure1: Current personal use of social media platforms at UCU

Table 1:Library services that should be accessed		
via social media platforms at UCU library		
Preferred social media library services at UCU library	**Number of responses**	**Percentages (%)**
Research support	25	20.2
Library news	20	16.1
Reference services	18	14.5
Information literacy	17	13.7
Searching the catalogue and subject guides	16	12.9
Instant feedback from the library contact information	15	12.1
Constant reminders on library working hours (public holidays, weekends)	13	10.5
Total	**124**	**100**

Table2: Expected benefits of social media use by UCU library

Responses	Response rates	
	N	Percent (%)
Fast and easy outreach	19	26.7
Communication	14	19.9
Research support	10	14.1
Round the clock availability	8	11.3
Study support	7	9.8
Collaboration	5	7
Library marketing and promotion	4	5.6
Community building	2	2.8
Professional networking	2	2.8
Total	71	100

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Challenges of accessing library services through social media platforms

- Poor internet connections

- User ignorance about use of social media platforms

- High purchasing costs of equipment (smartphones and laptops)

- Library rules against use of phones in the library

- Non-use of the library

- User failure to embrace social media platforms

- Non responses on social media messages

- Inadequate power supply

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Recommendations

• UCU Library to develop a social media policy

Steps to effective social media policy development

✓ *Conduct a user needs assessment*

✓ *Investigate library Internet connectivity and power failures*

✓ *Develop a library marketing, monitoring and evaluation strategy*

✓ *Provide user education*

✓ *Staff training*

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Study implementation

• UCU library has already implemented use of Facebook (facebook.com/UCULibrary) and Twitter (@UcuLibrary)

✓ Communication on upcoming library activities;

✓ Research support;

✓ ASK a Librarian.

✓ UCU library offers free WiFi service to students and staff.

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