

Promotion of Library Services and Activities through Media: A Case Study of Social Media Platform

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Abstract: The purpose of the study is to explore and evaluate how social media platforms can effectively promote library services and activities, enhance use engagement and improve awareness among students through strategic content creation, distribution and feedback-driven assessment. The advancement of information and communication technology (ICT) has significantly transformed traditional library services into more dynamic, user-centric systems. Ine of the most impactful developments is the integration of social media into library operations. Social media platform such as Facebook, X (Twitter), Instagram and YouTube etc. have emerged as powerful tools for the collection, promotion and dissemination of information. Libraries are increasingly adopting these platforms to interact with users, share resources, conduct virtual events and promote library services.

Keywords: Libraries, Social Media, Information Technology, User Engagement, Digital Libraries, Librarians, ICT.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the 21st century, the role of libraries has undergone a substantial transformation due to the rapid advancement of information and communication technologies (ICT). Traditionally, libraries served as physical repositories of books and print materials, offering a quiet place for study and research. However, with the evolution of digital technologies and the internet, libraries have expanded their services to include digital resources and virtual access. Among these advancements the emergence and widespread use of social media have become particularly significant. Social media platforms have emerged as dynamic tools in the communication and information sharing ecosystem. Similarly in modern information age, librarians are responsible for selecting, acquiring, processing and disseminating of accurate and reliable information resources to meet library user's needs. Earlier, librarians depend on manual operations to carry out their activities starting from acquisition to dissemination of information but with the incorporation of technology to libraries, librarians now provide services physically and virtually or electronically. This change also means that librarians need to develop themselves by acquiring new knowledge and skills that could enable them function efficiently and effectively at the same time contribute to their professional growth. restricted to only the traditional face to face discussion and at a particular location. It affords and presents the opportunity to share their opinions, views, and experiences during a discourse or on an issue of concern. Information communication technology (ICT) avails local and international networking, where image, document and sound can be shared and accessed easily. The social media tools are numerous but the focus of this paper include; Facebook, Twitter (X), Blog, Wiki, LinkedIn, and YouTube. Libraries across the world have increasingly recognized the potential of social media to enhance services delivery, connect with users and promote library resources in innovative ways. Social media allows libraries to reach a broader audience beyond their physical space and facilitates real time interaction with users. Through regular updates, event promotions, digital content sharing and user feedback, libraries can remain relevant in a fast-changing digital landscape. This transformation is not limited to developed nations; libraries in developing countries including India, are also embracing these platforms to remain effective and accessible. The shift from traditional to digital methods of information dissemination has also altered user behavior and expectations. Modern library users, especially students and research scholars, prefer instant access to information, digital engagement and personalized services, all of which social platforms can offer efficiently. Thus, the integration of social media into library function is no longer optional but essential for collaborative communication and is a key tool for enhancing library visibility and user participation.

1.1 What is social media?

Social media refers to online platforms and websites that allow users to create, share, and interact with content. These platforms enable communication, networking, and content distribution among individuals, businesses, and organizations. The term social media refers to the collection of technologies that capture communication, content, and so on across individuals, their friends, and their social networks. Examples of social media include social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter, blogging technologies like Type Pad and WordPress, crowd sourcing products like Wikipedia, photo and video sharing sites like Flickr and YouTube, and others. These technologies help users easily create content on the Internet and share it with others. Social media is the infrastructure that helps users become publishers of content that is interesting to them and their friends.

Popular Social Media Platforms

1. Facebook – General social networking, sharing posts, photos, and videos.
2. Instagram – Photo and video sharing, Stories, Reels.
3. Twitter (X) – Short messages (tweets), news, and discussions.
4. LinkedIn – Professional networking, job searching.
5. YouTube – Video sharing, vlogging, live streaming.
6. Reddit – Discussion forums (subreddits) on various topics.
7. Pinterest – Image sharing, inspiration boards.
8. WhatsApp/Telegram – Messaging apps with group chats.

Uses of Social Media

- Communication: Chatting, video calls, and sharing updates.
- Entertainment: Watching videos, memes, and live streams.
- Marketing & Business: Brand promotion, influencer marketing.
- News & Trends: Staying updated on global events.
- Education: Learning through tutorials, webinars, and courses.

Pros & Cons of Social Media

Pros:

- Connects people worldwide.
- Provides business opportunities.
- Spreads awareness on important issues.

Cons:

- Can lead to addiction.
- Privacy and security risks.
- Spread of misinformation.

Some of these Social Networking Sites (SNS) popularly used by librarians to meet the information needs of the users include:

Facebook is presently one of the most widely used social media platforms, largely due to its librarian-friendly interface and support for various applications such as JSTOR, WorldCat, OPAC, EBSCOhost, and other digital library services, which enhance access to scholarly resources and improve user engagement. It provides an effective medium for librarians to interact with users, enabling them to identify and address users' information needs more efficiently. Furthermore, libraries are increasingly integrating specialized library applications with Facebook to facilitate seamless access to resources and to enhance user engagement and service delivery. A blog is a website that is maintained by an individual or group with regular updates of information; this information could include diary entries, descriptions of events and educational material. Blogs are a successful strategy for disseminating internal information to library staff working in public services. They provide a convenient medium for the transfer of day-to-day communication, facilitate best practice and create an archive of institutional knowledge. Blogs are also a valuable tool to communicate targeted subject-specific library information to academic staff. Wiki is a free online resource that provides background knowledge and definitions of various concepts. The use of wikis has gone far beyond the domain of computer programming, and now it seems as if every Google search contains a Wikipedia entry. Wikis have entered into the public awareness. So, too, have wikis entered into the domain of professional library practice. LinkedIn serves as an online curriculum vitae (CV) sharing platform. It makes visible one's career, past employments and achievements. LinkedIn is the world's largest professional network that facilitates and creates career opportunities as well as connects professionals. Friestner (2013) opined that LinkedIn is an important tool because it gives a full picture of what librarians do, promotes collaboration, networking with library users, presents a professional identity and transferable skills. LinkedIn also provides an avenue for librarians to join groups and engage in discussions, broaden their knowledge and help to generate new and innovative ways of meeting challenges. Some of these groups on LinkedIn include; Librarianship Job Search and Careers Page, Librarians in the Job Market, LIS Career Options and Strategic Librarians among others (Robert, 2013). X (Twitter) This is a micro-blogging service that enables sending and receiving short tweets. It is a social networking platform where professionals from various fields discuss issues and prospects pertaining to their job or profession (Lepi, 2012). Twitter platform can assist librarians to connect with their counterpart globally to share news, information, knowledge and views on various subject areas. It also enables librarians to keep up with conferences, seminars, and workshops, all they need to do is to sign in and "follow" events in order to see what others are saying.

With the use of twitter, librarians can mentor their mentees and this can thus lead to professional growth and widening of professional network. YouTube is a video sharing platform, and a website that enables uploading of videos, rate, and comment. Berk (2009) opined that YouTube videos not just snatch individual's attention, but also provide for different learning needs which consist of at least four aspects of multiple intelligences, such as verbal/linguistic, visual/spatial, musical/rhythmic, and emotional intelligence. He reiterated that watching videos allow brain reactions in both side of the hemisphere, which helps increase and deepens understanding. YouTube allows professionals to learn about any topic of interest and watch video presentations that may foster their professional relevance, value and contribution to education. It can be used to develop career path and exchange best practice with other professionals. YouTube is one of the leading social media platforms used for training, education, skills and knowledge development, and therefore cannot be ignored for librarianship. Instagramis derived from the word 'instant'. It means fast category that its function is to make a quick photo, while the words 'gram' is taken from the word 'telegram' that intends to send information to others fast. So, Instagram is a combination of instant words and telegram. The use of the word Instagram can be interpreted as an application to send information quickly in the form of photos, managing photos, and photo editing apps, sharing applications or sharing photos to social networking (Sulistyo-Basuki, 1993). Instagram can be one of the tools required to support the realization of vision and mission of libraries. Thus, Instagram can be the most effective online social media today to promote library activities and services.

1.2 Significance of the Study

This study is imperative as it examines how libraries can effectively utilize social media platform to enhance their visibility, improve user engagement and create awareness about library services and programs. It highlights the role of digital media in transforming traditional library practices into more user centered and accessible service. Furthermore, the study helps in understanding user's perceptions and expectations regarding social media-based library services. In addition, the research identifies the opportunities and challenges faced by libraries and librarians in adopting social media tools for promotional purposes. The findings of the study will contribute to the development of effective strategies, best practices and policies for integrating social media into library services. Ultimately, the study aims to ensure that libraries remain relevant, innovative and responsive to the changing information needs of users in a technology driven society.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

1. To examine the role of social media in the promotion of library services and activities.
2. To identify the preferred social media platforms used by libraries for outreach and communication.
3. To evaluate the effectiveness of social media in promoting library resources, services and activities among users.
4. To analyse the user awareness of social media-based promotional activities.
5. To know the purpose, challenges and limitations faced in utilizing social media platforms by librarians.
6. To suggest strategies and best practices for the effective use of social media in enhancing the visibility and impact of library services and activities.

1.4 Limitations of the Study

The study is limited to academic and public libraries only. Selected social media platforms (Facebook, X, Instagram, Wiki, YouTube, LinkedIn etc.) are considered. Data were collected through google form and structured questionnaire, distributed by post and by hand. A total of 100 users were analysed, including 50 librarians and 50 library users.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The literature review plays a very important role in any research. It helps in tracing and acquiring wide-ranging information on the subject. The use of social media in libraries has emerged as a significant research domain within library and information science. The review of literature synthesizes insights from several recent studies and reports that explore the integration of social media tools in both academic and public library. Ayu and Abrizah (2011) engrossed on academic librarians' usage and perception of Facebook in Malaysian university libraries. The research found that while many librarians were personally familiar with Facebook but professional use was still in early stages. Aharony (2012) conducted an exploratory study on the use of Facebook in libraries, aiming to understand how libraries interact with users through social media. Mahmood and Richardson (2013) undertook a survey of ARL (Association of Research Libraries) websites to assess the adoption of web2.0 tools, including social media, in U.S> academic libraries. Their findings indicated that web2.0 adoption was widespread, with most libraries integrating blogs, RSS feeds, YouTube and Facebook into their services. Collins and Quan-Haase (2014) conducted an in-depth analysis of current trends and future challenges in the use of social media by academic libraries. Their research focused on the shift from one-way information broadcasting to two-way engagement models. The study highlighted that libraries were increasingly using social media not just for announcements but also for dialogue with users, including responding to queries, initiating discussions, and conducting virtual reference services. Gupta and Walia (2015) explored the application of social media in Indian libraries. Their study revealed that while the awareness of social media was high among library professionals, actual usage varied widely. Libraries that had implemented social media platforms reported increased user engagement, improved visibility, and better promotion of e-resources. Similarly, Al-Daihani (2016) covered in their research the use of social media by public libraries in Kuwait. The study revealed a significant shift in the perception of librarians regarding the role of social media in public service. Harrison et al. (2017) investigate a phenomenological study to explore social media use in academic libraries. Using qualitative methods, the researcher explored librarians lived experiences with social media. The study revealed that social media had become a vital component of academic library outreach strategies. Librarians reported using platforms like Facebook, Twitter and Instagram to share research tips, promote database and foster community engagement.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology refers to the systematic used to conduct research, gather data and analyse the findings. It provides the framework that guides how the research was carried out to achieve the objectives effectively and scientifically. This study aims to understand the use of social media in libraries, with a focus on identifying patterns of usage, librarian and user perceptions, benefits and challenges associated with social media platforms. The methodology of this research includes the research design, sample size, sampling technique, tools for data collection and methods for data analysing.

3.1 Research Design

In this research descriptive research design were adopts, which is suitable for obtaining information concerning the current status of the phenomena to describe what exists with respect to conditions in a situation. Since the primary aim of the research is to analyse the use of social media in libraries and how it impacts library services, a descriptive method helps gather data from a targeted users and summarize the findings statistically. This type of research is useful in studying behaviours, trends, opinions and interactions among librarians and users regarding social media in libraries.

3.2 Population and sample Size

The population for this study includes librarian and library users from both academic and public libraries. These participants were selected from various institutions including universities, colleges and government- run public libraries, with representation from both urban and semi-urban areas. A sample size of 100 respondents was chosen for the study. Includes 50 librarians from different academic and public libraries and 50 regular library users (students, researchers and general readers). This division ensure a balanced perspective from both service providers (librarian) and service recipients (users).

3.3 Sampling Technique

In this study a purposive sampling method, atype of non-probability sampling was used. This technique was adopted to select participant who are familiar with or actively involved in the use of social media in libraries. Since the focus was on gathering detailed information about the subject matter, only those librarians who had implemented or managed social media platforms in their libraries and users who had interacted with such platforms were selected. Purposive sampling is particularly useful in qualitative or mixed-methods research where the intent is to gain deep insight rather than generate broad generalizations.

3.4 Tools and Techniques for Data Collection

Data were collected through google forms and structured questionnaire was developed, consisting of both close-ended and open-ended questions. The question was divided into several sections:

- Demographic information (age, profession, location).
- Awareness and use of social media platforms.
- Purposes and frequency of use.
- Benefits perceived from using social media in libraries.
- Challenges faced in implementation and usage.
- Suggestions for improvement.

The questionnaire was administrated in both online (Google Forms) and offline formats to ensure wider coverage. Additionally, informal interviews with selected librarians were conducted to gain qualitative insights into specific strategies and experiences related to social media management in libraries.

3.5 Data analysis

The collected data were analysed using simple statistical techniques such as frequency distribution, percentage analysis and graphical representation. The responses to closed-ended questions were tabulated and interpreted using MS Excel. The open-ended responses and interview content were analysed through qualitative content analysis, identifying recurring themes, challenges and best practices.

4. Data analysis and Interpretation of Data

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents by Category

Respondent Type	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Librarians	50	50%
Library Users	50	50%
Total	100	100%

Interpretation:

in above data sample is equally distributed between librarians and library users, providing a balanced perspective from both service providers and service recipients.

Table 2: Awareness of Social Media Usage in Libraries

Awareness Level	Librarians	Users	Total	Percentage (%)
Aware	46	42	88	88%
Not Aware	4	8	12	12%
Total	50	50	100	100%

Interpretation:

it is shows that majority (88%) of the respondents are aware of the use of social media in libraries. This indicates increasing dissemination and recognition of social media as a tool in library services.

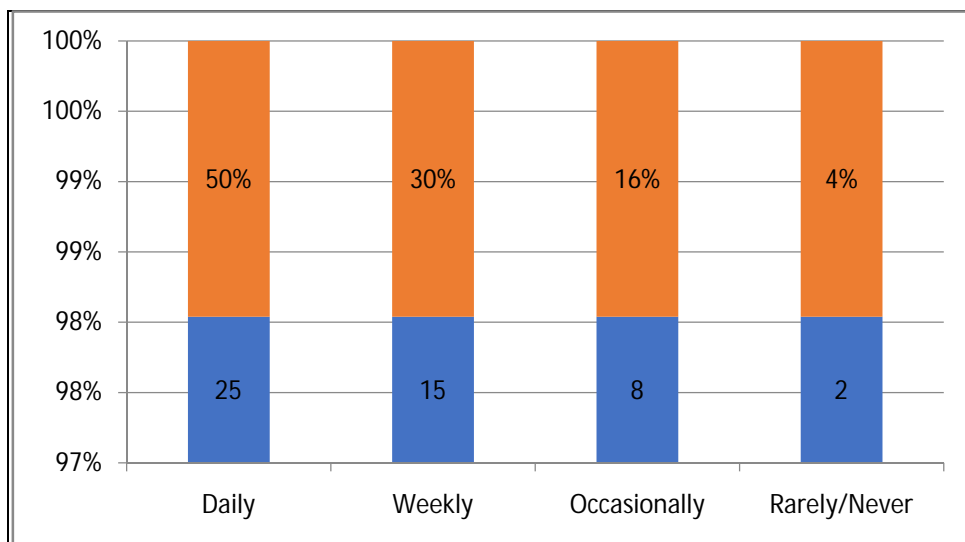
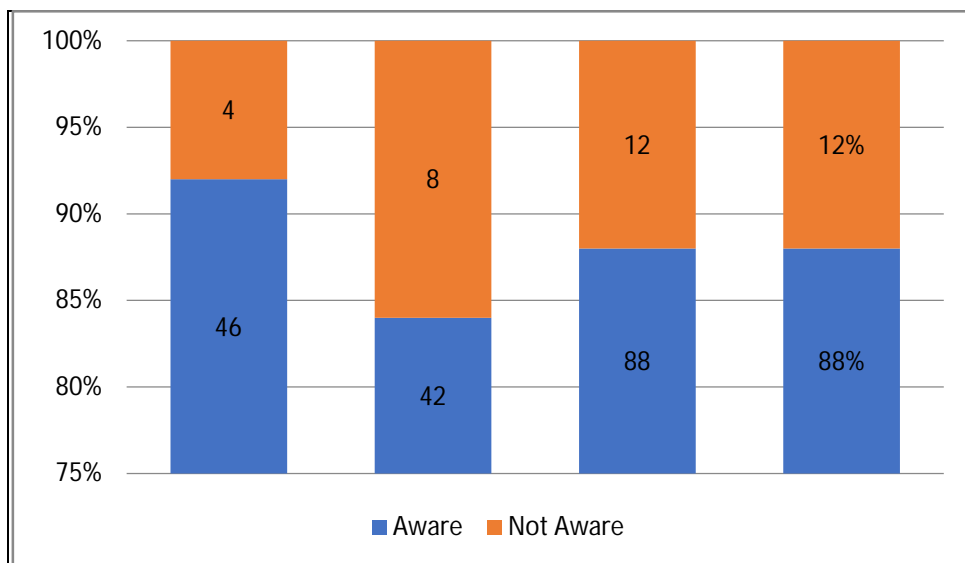
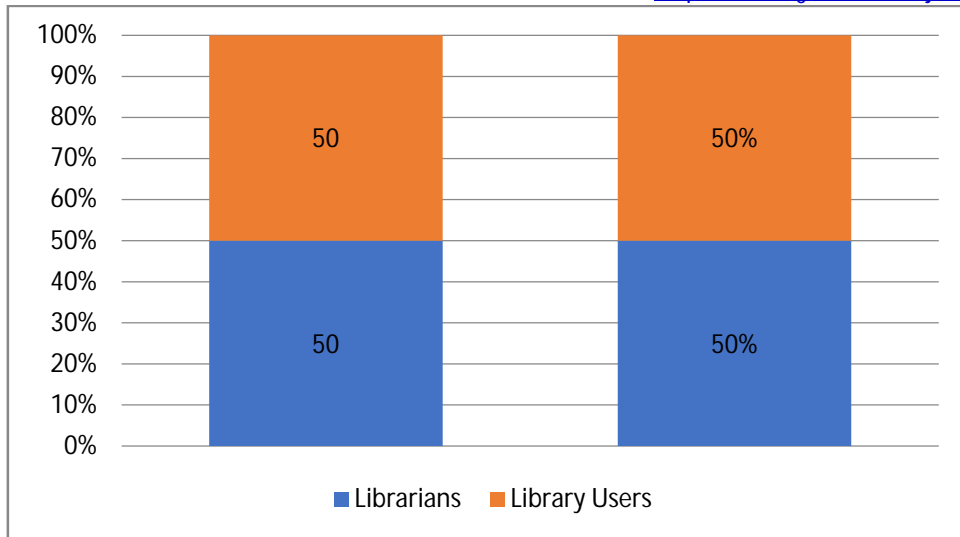


Table 3: Frequency of Social Media Use by Libraries

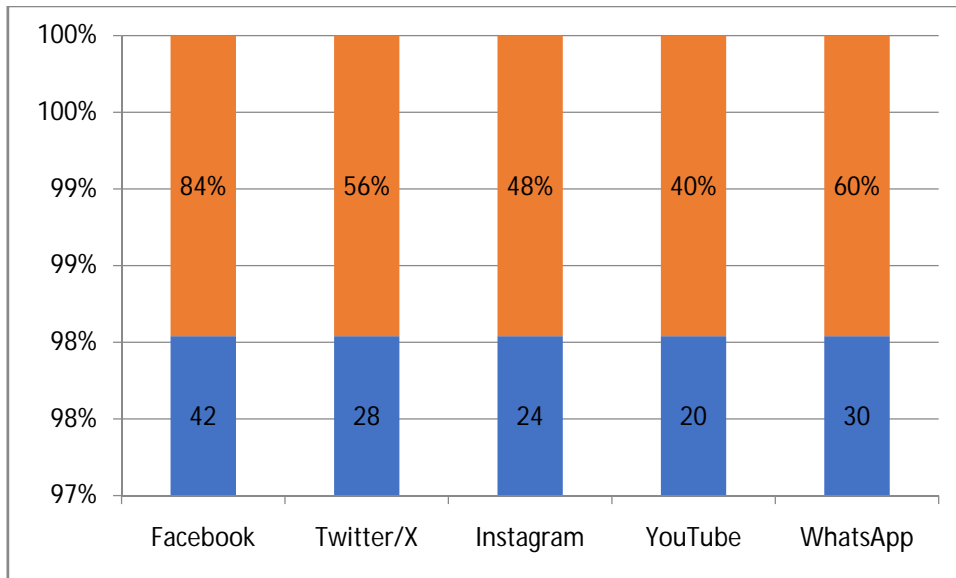
Frequency	Librarians (No.)	Percentage (%)
Daily	25	50%
Weekly	15	30%
Occasionally	8	16%
Rarely/Never	2	4%
Total	50	100%

Interpretation:

above data shows that 50% of respondent using social media platforms daily for library-related work, showing a high level of activity. Weekly (30%) usage is also significant, indicating regular engagement across platforms.

Table 4: Preferred Social Media Platforms by Librarians

Platform	No. of Responses	Percentage (%)
Facebook	42	84%
Twitter/X	28	56%
Instagram	24	48%
YouTube	20	40%
WhatsApp	30	60%



Interpretation:

it is revealed that Facebook is the most preferred platform among librarians, followed by WhatsApp and Twitter. This reflects the popularity and ease of communication on these platforms for library promotion and engagement.

Table 5: Purpose of Using Social Media by Librarians

Purpose	No. of Responses	Percentage (%)
Promoting Library Events	40	80%
Sharing Digital Resources	35	70%
Answering User Queries	25	50%
Conducting Online Competitions	18	36%
Posting Announcements & News	38	76%

Interpretation:

Table No. 5 shows that libraries use social media for multiple purposes, with event promotion and announcements being the most common. The use for sharing digital resources and user interaction is also significant.

Table 6: Perceived Benefits of Social Media in Libraries (Librarians' View)

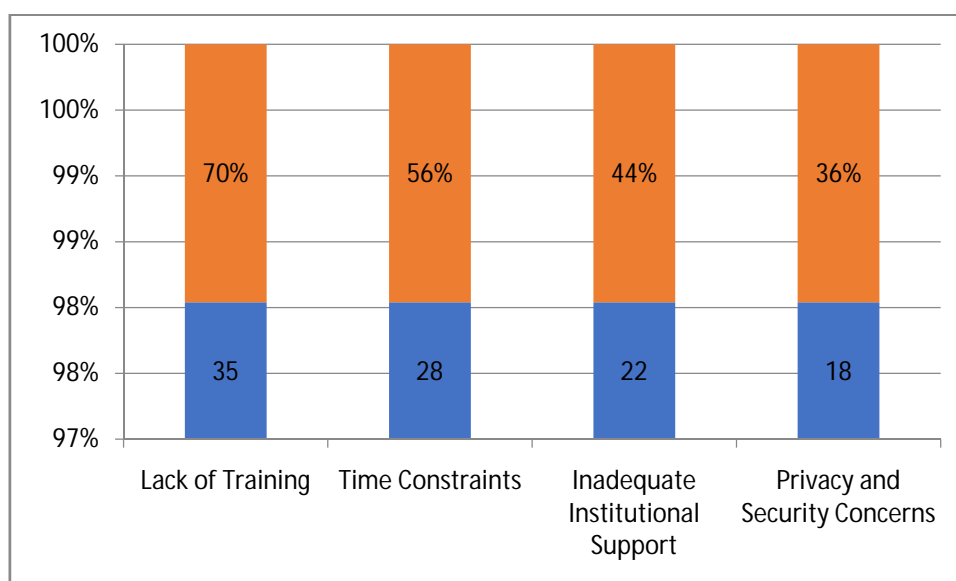
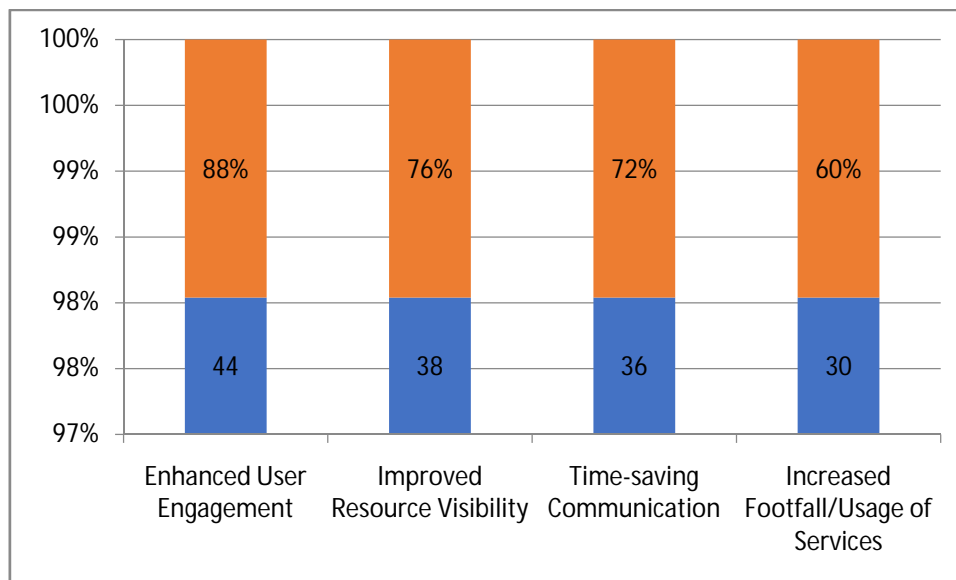
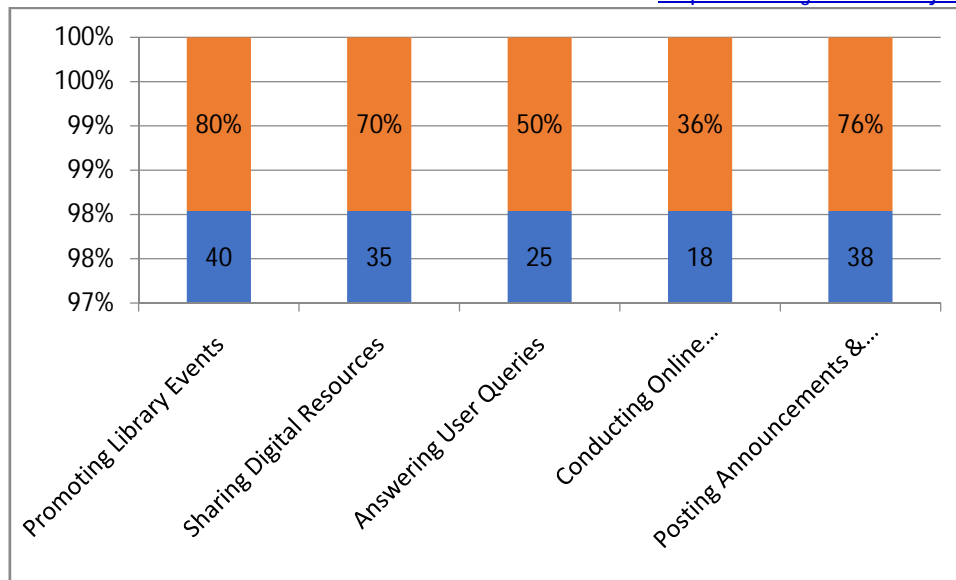
Benefit	No. of Responses	Percentage (%)
Enhanced User Engagement	44	88%
Improved Resource Visibility	38	76%
Time-saving Communication	36	72%
Increased Footfall/Usage of Services	30	60%

Interpretation:

It is observed in table and figure no. 6 large number of librarians believe social media significantly improves user engagement and visibility of resources. These platforms also help save time and attract more users to library services.

Table 7: Challenges Faced by Librarians in Using Social Media

Challenge	No. of Responses	Percentage (%)
Lack of Training	35	70%
Time Constraints	28	56%
Inadequate Institutional Support	22	44%
Privacy and Security Concerns	18	36%

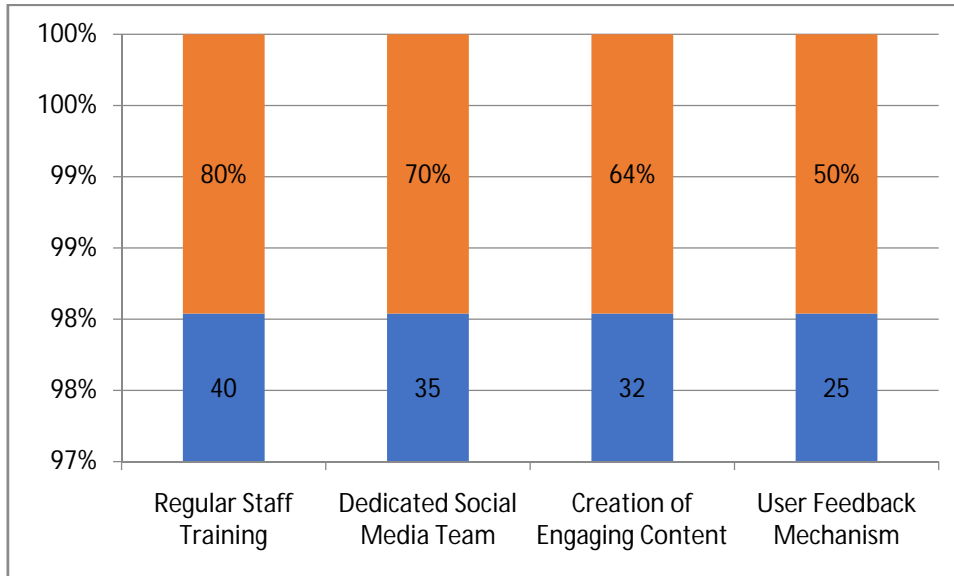


Interpretation:

It shows in table and figure no. 7 the most common challenge is the lack of proper training in social media tools. Time constraints and lack of administrative support also affect effective implementation.

Table 8: Suggestions by Respondents to Improve Social Media Use in Libraries

Suggestion	No. of Responses	Percentage (%)
Regular Staff Training	40	80%
Dedicated social media Team	35	70%
Creation of Engaging Content	32	64%
User Feedback Mechanism	25	50%



Interpretation:

Respondents emphasize the importance of regular training and a dedicated team to manage social media. Engaging content and a feedback loop are also crucial for user retention and service improvement.

FINDINGS, SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION

The present study is intended to investigate the promotion of library services and activities through media. In order to fulfil this aim six specific objectives are identified. Based on the results, study recommends that keeping in view the importance of social media for marketing library among internet users; internet service must be provided in all types of libraries in order to utilize social media tools. All libraries should develop their web site. Libraries should create their social media marketing plan and social media services. It is recommended that libraries should provide their patrons with tools for accessing social media by developing social media page on library web site. Facebook is much popular among teens; it is recommended that libraries should develop their Facebook page on their web sites. It would keep the library fresh in teen's minds. In conclusion; this paper has tried to examine the concept of social networking and its application to library services for a pro-active awareness and training to educate both the librarians and the users on the invaluable importance of utilizing social networking in library services.

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