

Academic Librarians' Activities in Creating Social-Media Authority in Three Selected Nigerian University Libraries

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Abstract

The proliferation of mass data on the internet is currently witnessing spoof of different websites and fake content in some of the social media platforms. This development prompted academic libraries/librarians not to trust completely, some of the information (contents) in the social media arena. In order to avoid errors, rumours, and misinformation which can easily spread through social media channels, librarians as information professionals become duty-bound to check the validity and reliability of the contents so as to maintain trust, credibility, and authority in the social media units of the libraries. Therefore, this study is set (a) to investigate how academic libraries/librarians create users' trust, build a reputation and maintain social authority; and, (b) to explore the constraints of academic libraries/librarians in maintaining social media authority in Nigerian academic libraries. It is a qualitative research approach, using Rogers's 2010 Diffusion of Innovation theory, based on the Innovation Decision Process. The results indicated that academic libraries/librarians have been in the vanguard of establishing credible content on their social media platforms. Libraries

and librarians are shifting focus from the traditional method of checking the authority and validity of information (content) to a new way of assessing the authority of content in academic libraries. Also, it was found that academic librarians' behavioral attitudes towards social media content such as inappropriate content, lack of teamwork, lack of management support, and lack of social media policies, among other issues are impediments to the flow of establishing credible social media authority in the academic libraries. Notwithstanding, the researchers offer suggestions for social media libraries/librarians to brace up and work-hand-glove to strategize and know more about the contents the customers may have passion therein, in order to earn trust, maintain online reputation and gain social authority in the academic libraries.

Keywords: Social Media; Web 2.0; Authority; Nigerian University Libraries

Introduction

In recent years, the unprecedented proliferation of mass data and information on the Internet, made academic libraries to adjust, not to trust completely, information and or contents that are found on the Internet unless tested and proved valid and accurate. This development on the Internet has necessitated academic libraries and librarians, to put forth as a duty to sift outright content and discard information that is inappropriate within the context of social media in the academic libraries (Bradley, 2015). Such a step is to fulfil the goal of social media and its marketing activities in the library which is aimed to drive people from the unknown to their perfect and clean sites for educational, informational, and

recreational and entertainment platforms. Ultimately, in the library context, the activities on social media platforms, aim not for profit, rather, it is to gain customers' trust, earn service reputation and authority (Bradley, 2015; Vlieghe, Muls, and Rutten, 2016). According to Bradley (2015) Social Media Authority (SMA) in the library context, refers to the library users looking up to the librarian as an expert in both the content and services. Against this backdrop, librarians whose responsibilities are known, among others, to be the organisers, interpreters, and providers of information, have considered it a duty to create a strategy to sift out accurate content and discard information that is inappropriate or wrong within the context of social media in the academic libraries (Bradley, 2015).

Consequent to the breakthrough of the innovation on the use of social media applications worldwide, academic libraries in Nigeria are faced with new challenges. Such challenges are the control of information resources in physical and virtual domains, meeting the rapidly changing information needs and expectations of the 21st-century users, making themselves more relevant in trends of the digital age, attracting users to the library, and maintaining trust and reputation in terms of social media contents in order to retain customers in the library (Akorhonor and Olise, 2015; Iwhiwhu, Ruteyan, and Eghwubare, 2010). Hence, the need for the academic librarians to reconsolidate, reshape, re-design, re-package their resources, and re-strategise their services as a means of retaining trust, reputation, and authority in the academic library environments. Therefore, this research is set to focus on the understanding of how academic libraries/librarians' strategies in establishing social media authority through building users' trust and online reputation in Nigerian university libraries.

Literature Review

Presently, society cannot control the flow of news or even messages anymore (Luoma-aho and Vos, 2010). Individuals, organisations, and corporate bodies have to compete against other sources for them to be heard and trusted. Veil, Buehner, and Palenchar (2011) assert that the news of a crisis today can be shared and re-shared, reaching millions of people without the intervening presence of a

journalist. This has led to information on social media in the 21st Century going viral without being controlled. Librarians make use of social media to connect with their users easily (O'Dell, 2010). They use the platforms to promote their library services and events (Charnigo and Barnett-Ellis, 2007). Important information sources in some libraries are connected to users through social media platforms (Milstein, 2009). Literature has shown that in some institutions, Facebook is used to engage users when they want to register in the academic libraries.

Accordingly, it has been used to facilitate professional relationships within and beyond the libraries (Graham, Faix, and Hartman, 2009). Social media provide the platform for academic libraries to establish authority in their respective libraries based on the available resources and services (Bradley, 2015). Despite the increasing use of social media by academic librarians, still, the attitudes of librarians in checking the validity and authority of the social media content in the library have been very low. The overall assumption of Digital Object Identifier (DOI) research centres on the circumstances which increase or decrease the likelihood that a new idea, product, or practice will be adopted by members of a given culture. Rogers (1995) identified: knowledge, persuasion, decision, implementation, and confirmation as the five steps of the decision-making process. It is against this backdrop that Mahler and Rogers (1999) who theorises that there are three important factors in the decision-making process which they classified as: a) those who make the decision: b) whether the decision is made freely; and c) voluntary implementation. In line with this, Roger postulated three types of innovation-decision that can be adopted to gain authority or acceptance from customers. Thus: *Optional innovation-decision* - this refers to a decision that is made by an individual who is to some extent, distinguished from others in a community; *Collective-Innovation decision* - this refers to a decision that is made collectively by all individuals of a community. *Authority innovation-decision* - this is a decision enforced upon by a supreme body or someone higher in the hierarchy of authority (Rogers, 2010). This research examines the study based on social media content; building trust and reputation through social media; social media engagement and social media status updates/feedback. The four concepts

discussed below are the key factors that build the minds of users, which leads to building the trust of the contents and prompted user's engagements and thereabouts lead to user's comments and feedback. Hence, the need to understand.

Social Media Content

Contents determine the success of any social media platform (Smith, 2013). Bradley (2015) affirms that content can simply be judged and validated on the basis of the reputation of the publisher, editors, or the compilers of the information in the academic libraries. He noted that, in the past, the authoritativeness of information depends largely upon the method of compilation, scope, treatment, arrangement, and items of the information, such as the full name of the author, birth, academic and professional qualifications, position held and publications contributions; indexes and cross-references; updating and revisions. Specifically, the format such as the clarity, uniqueness, and the reliability of the information (Bradley, 2015). However, the advent of the Internet has created a different set of problems in terms of accuracy and validation of social media content in academic libraries. Kalyanaraman and Sundar (2006), confirm that web portals that personalise content, tend to generate more positive user attitudes. Today, libraries can only be successful in social media activities, if the content illustrates what is relevant to the customers.

Building Trust and Reputation in Social Media

Presently, some social media users are faced with difficulty understanding what content is genuine on social media platforms. Bradley (2015) expressed that, during the print era, it was simple to trace who was the publisher, their reputation, the authors and what they had previously published, and so forth. He further demonstrated that an individual can locate information about an organisation through his favourite search engine by just typing the name of the establishment and clicking the website. However, today, even if that can happen, one must think of exactly what he wants to do with what sort of information. Bradley (2015) stated that Facebook does not monitor pages or posts for accuracy, nor is

YouTube that can be used to upload 100 pieces of video content every minute. This development in the social media arena makes it hard for every content on the platform to be trusted. According to Reich, Bentman, and Jackman (2008), in order to avoid conflict and crisis, it is critical to know how people process the information they receive and also the organization that disseminates it. This helps to standardise the logic and the platform to which such information is meant for accordingly, which eventually builds trust and reputation on the organisation or the academic libraries. Maxwell (2016) advised that one useful way to build trusted and reputable content is by finding and sharing quality content that can invariably affirm the authority of the expertise. Thus, if the users understand the firm authority in a given platform, they will always be attracted to its website. According to Armstrong (2015), if an individual or an organisation does not gain authority in social media, such body will likely to perform less and less social media marketing. Hence, it is the pride of academic libraries to focus on trust, reputation, and authority in both contents and services.

Social Media Engagement with Customers

Social media has been used in various ways to engage and capture the attention of users through quality content. How academic libraries engage with users at different levels to fulfill their customers' needs which aim at building trust, reputation and authority were described by Zohoorian-Fooladi and Abrizah (2014), in a form of a honeycomb framework of seven social media building blocks: *Presence, Synchronicity, Information Needs, Groups, Conversation, Relationship, and Current Awareness*. This is evident that librarians make use of social media platforms based on this framework to establish mutual communication, facilitate interaction and establish users' trust, online reputation, and social authority despite its challenges. Siddike and Kiran (2015) point out that, academic libraries in Malaysia use Electronic-Word-of-Mouth (eWOM) to raise awareness and build a relationship with the users' communities through social networking sites. Harinarayana and Raju (2010) found that some university libraries have been using social networking sites to make available photos of library events aimed at fostering collaboration and participation which are

the most attractive features of Web 2.0. In an effort of gaining reputation and authority on social media in the academic libraries, (Boateng and Liu, 2014) found that academic libraries in the US had to develop strategies for making the best use of social media. Furthermore, Wordofa (2014) comments that media sharing sites are used by academic libraries to engage users through the provision of library instructions and tutorials as well as sharing a wide variety of topics. These activities are attractive and are the potential for building trust, reputation, and authority on the social media content in academic libraries. To compel customers to accept and believe in the social media contents, the academic librarians have to take a level of responsibility in establishing the facts and validity of the information.

Social Media Status Updates/Feedback

Academic libraries are recognised to have social media authority by regularly participating in online conversations and contributing valuable information in an honest and genuine approach. Research has shown that the best way to reach and attract regular users of social media is through the constant updates of the social media status (Connell, 2009). News linked to library's activities and events, sharing videos and photos, greetings to users that are posted by library Facebook page administrators are known as status updates (Ayu and Abrizah, 2011). In terms of authority, Ayu and Abrizah (2011) maintain that libraries that posted content daily are to have more "followers" and "likes" compared to libraries that updated the status only once a month. Abdullah, Chu, Rajagopal, Tung, and Kwong-Man (2015) reported that social media platforms offered some interactive tools for a two-way communication which facilitate gathering users' feedback. Identifying the importance of updates and feedback which equally form part of reputation and authority, Boateng and Liu (2014) reveal that 97% of the top US academic libraries were using RSS (Really Simple Syndication) to communicate university news, events, and resource updates, while Chat/IM was used to provide real-time connections with users. They further noted that the libraries use various platforms to mediate the delivery of IM-based services.

Dickson and Holley (2010) comment that librarians can post news about the library and events

happening in the library and expect feedback from users. Similarly, Ezeani and Igwesi (2012) admit that librarians periodically post messages, share information on a particular subject or issues both in the institutions and government and allow users to comment or contribute to the content. Akporhonor and Olise (2015) contend that social media has become a dependable platform for the dissemination of information, a forum for feedback mechanism, research, and as well for promotion. They further acknowledge that social media like Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, YouTube, Wiki, etc., are useful for the promotion of library resources and services and for the speedy collection of feedback from library patrons. Such dynamic activities of social media are projecting effective services and also maintaining relationships with users through updates and users' feedback which invariably attracts trust, reputation, and authority in the academic libraries. Such activities encourage patrons and new fans to join the library. Hence, it is not out of place to note that social media is a catalyst in re-engineering a two-way communication for both the libraries and the patrons in terms of building trust, reputation, and authority.

Objectives of the Study

The focus of this research is to:

- i. investigate how academic libraries and librarians establish their social media authority in regard to building users' trust and online reputation as information experts;
- ii. explore the constraints of maintaining social media authority in the academic libraries.

The research is guided by the following questions:

- i. How do academic libraries/librarians establish social media authority and maintain users' trust and reputation?
- ii. What are the deterrents of maintaining social media authority in academic libraries?

Methodology

The design of this research is a qualitative research approach, the reason for the choice of this method is because qualitative research attempts to understand and make meaning of a phenomenon from the

participants' perspective, in which also the researcher can approach the phenomenon from an explanatory and critical stance (Merriam, 2009). The researchers explore the academic librarians' innovation in line with Rogers (2010) postulation: *Optional, Collective and Authority* innovative decisions to understand their novelty as the social media units strive to gain authority in the academic library's setting.

The population of the study covers all the academic staff from the three federal university libraries in Nigeria. Viz: University of Jos, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, and the University of Abuja which are the oldest universities in the north-central zone in Nigeria. The total number of academic staff in the three universities staff was fifty-six (56). However, 15 staff consisting of university librarians and those directly related to the study constitute the sample. The participants in this research were

classified into three different categories. Thus: (a) University Librarians (b) system librarians; librarian11; Assistant librarian and media librarians selected from each of the three universities used for the study. Participants have been in the services of the university libraries at different levels and stages. The five academic librarians in each of the universities have the knowledge and experience of ICT and especially Social Media application. They have served between five (5) and thirty (30) years of experience respectively. Each participant reported having served in various sections in different capacities including social media units of the libraries. Table 1, shows the demographic information of the participants. The semi-structured interview was used as an instrument for data collection because the participants are few in number. Thus the issue of the questionnaire is not necessary for this qualitative research.

Table 1: Participants' Profile

Participants	Positions held	Qualifications	Age
University Library A			
Kuh	University Librarian	PhD	57
Ezau	System Librarian	MLIS	39
Zain	Assistant Librarian	BLIS	27
Jah	Librarian II	BLIS	36
Rem	Head of Media	MLIS	40
University Library B			
Dita	University Librarian	PhD	53
Sah	Law Librarian	BLIS	37
Lim	System Librarian	BLIS	31
Dama	Librarian II	BLIS	34
Gere	Head of Media	MLIS	42
University Library C			
Ran	University Librarian	PhD	56
Ganiyat	Institute of Agriculture Librarian	BLIS	39
Areba	System Librarian	BLIS	31
Bippa	Librarian I	MLIS	47
Shock	Head of Media	MLIS	51

Pseudonyms were used to protect the identity of the participants in the data analysis (Kite, 1999). The decision to use pseudonyms was made earlier in the research and it was based primarily on the philosophical principle of participation and collaboration between the researchers and the participants. .

The interview was conducted in the participants' workplaces (offices) for convenience and privacy. Each interview with participants lasted between 40-45 minutes. The conversation was recorded using an audiotape for coding and reporting. A code of numbers was used to identify interview recordings and transcriptions to create room for confidentiality at the point of analysis. The transcription of the data was done logically by the researchers to ensure that ethical issues and the participants' confidentiality are maintained.

Results

Based on the qualitative research approach, the data analysis consists of two segments which are based on the research questions. The two research questions were modeled in order to realise the findings of the study.

Research Question 1. How do academic libraries/librarians establish social media authority and maintain users' trust and reputation?

From the onset, this research aims to identify the determinants of academic libraries/librarians in creating social media authority which is purposely to expose the creditability of the libraries as an expert in information acquisition, organisation, dissemination, and services rendered in the academic environment. According to the participants, academic libraries in Nigeria have from time-to-time established Facebook, Twitter, and other platforms to have question and answer sessions with their customers. They firmly believed that social media content attracts followers and their importance as well, ensuring a strong way of coming up with social media authority for the academic libraries. The researchers' interaction with the participants on the occurrences of social media in academic libraries reveals academic libraries' frequent existence on social media platforms to gain trust, reputation, and authority. Mr. Jah, one of the participants informed

the researchers that: *“The social media unit of our library shares links with other similar libraries and we keep on observing the comments of our customers regularly.”* This statement shows that the more academic libraries share links to other libraries, focus on the objective of the libraries in terms of content, and also engage the users on their platforms then, the greater the degree of social media authority in the university libraries. The University Librarian B and Zain (Assistant Librarian A) shared testimonies from users that are constantly engaged on the platforms. The excerpts: *“I notice that the library has been receiving recognition through customers' testimonies about our social media activities and services.”* Dita. *“...we have just realized in our social media unit that the more people engaged on our Facebook and Twitter platforms, the more we command authority in our social media platforms.”* Zain. Thus, the evidence of social media authority is attributed to sharing of links, comments, and frequent engagement of customers on the social media platforms in the academic libraries. The library created a platform in order to serve their users effectively and at the same time collect feedback of their services from users which invariably will enhance their performance. Users on the other hand engage on library platform to access information concerning their studies, new arrivals in terms of information resources, general news, and information concerning the library.

Building Users' Trust and Online Reputation:

Optional-Innovation Decision Process

This section aims to understand the influence of academic librarians' decision on striving to maintain users' trust and online reputation on social media platforms in the academic libraries based on Rogers's (2010) innovation-decision process. . Participants recount their familiarity and skills acquired over years of experience in their workplaces. They believed that such knowledge has resulted in their superior awareness of their customers' needs. The participants (Ran, University Librarian C; Shock, head of media A; Areba, System Librarian C and Gere, head of media B) admit to having been influenced by their knowledge of the environment. The excerpts:

Most of the contents posted on the platforms like my Twitter and Facebook pages were based on my past understanding of our users' needs and their expectation from us in the library ...Ran.

... .. my activities are derived from the experience I had with the social media platforms within and outside the library. ... I thank God that my experience with some of the platforms helps me to serve the customers better ... Ezau.

... yes ... people often said "experience is the best teacher" ... as an administrator of social media, I have worked for over 10 years now. Over the years, I have been able to search other databases to sort for myself what I feel is best for the library.Areba.

...As the head of the social media unit, I think so much about the library's credibility and what it stands for... and I have tried so much to maintain quality services in terms of contents posted on the social media platform ... Gere.

The distinctive aspect of this innovation is that all decision is centred on the individual and he/she wears the crown or bear the risk whatsoever. The decision taken in building users' trust and online reputation at this level is faster and easier than collective decisions by the entire social media librarians. However, the individual at this stage may be influenced by anything around him/her. One basic and unique distinctive aspect is that he/she is the unit of his decision-making.

Collective-Innovation Decision Process

This study found that collective decision on social media content among professional librarians is an assurance way to achieve social authority, especially in the area of publicity and marketing library services. According to participants, users can tweet and retweet information, but that does not mean that it is genuine. Henceforth, they felt that social media content should be thoroughly checked collectively among social media librarians, to uphold the reliability and validity of the information (content) which invariably formed an authority. Thus:

Yah ... social media require sincerity in every information that is found on the platform. So, before anything else, we have to jointly check our previous posts and dictate those feedbacks such as likes and or 'shares' and most importantly observed whether the post is actively utilized or not.Dama.

... we in the social media unit have to employ various means by repeating relevant posting of information content we evaluate the quality and the sources of information to achieve our end results of social authority in the library. Lim.

Besides, the participants describe how they have to collectively go deeper to study the customers of the libraries. According to the participants, going by such a collective process they identified the individuals who share content on their platforms. This helps them to engage the users with social media content of their choices in order to earn users' trust, reputation and maintain social authority. The participants acknowledge that quality goes much further than quantity. So, their target is to maintain the minimum number of users who can trust their platforms. *"... we often undertake community analysis of the academic environment for the purpose to earn social authority.* Ezau.

The researcher probed further on what the participants do to win their customers' desires after studying their needs, and Ezau responded: *"... Well, on such assignment, we make effort to know the researchers and scholars' interest, and in turn, serve them in that manner, that has helped us to win their hearts."* He. Further added that: *"... in addition, we go down to the direct source of information either through in-depth search or otherwise to obtain evidence about the content which helps the library to establish the strength of the social media authority."* Ezau.

The participants acknowledge that rumours and misinformation can easily spread through social media channels. Hence, according to them, all these strategies are to curtail problems in the social media unit of the library. As a result of the numerous contents floating on the Internet, the researchers' inquiries are to know how the participants can identify contents that are rich and trusted in order to gain

authority. Aran, the chief librarian C who was also an active participant, said: "... to us, we source and substantiate contents that are educating, entertaining, enlightening and those that meet the objective of the library and which we feel that such contents add value (knowledge) to our customers before we can release for posting ..." Ran.

Sah, (law librarian B), emphasises the library concern on users, that not every aspect of content is rich to display on the social media platforms. "... one thing I know is that not everything we see that we publicize on the social media sites. We have to agree and justify the information... We do that to safeguard our users from being victims of rumors." Sah. In this regard, it shows that not only those contents that are exciting on the social media librarians' part and are informative that are shared on the social media platforms for their customers but also such must be tested and agreed by the majority. Collective innovation-decision procedure passes through many stages as it involves many hands to make a decision on an issue related to content in the social media unit. Contents are created through collective agreement, and each librarian must participate in the process and all members must satisfy before the contents are finally posted on the social media platforms.

Authority Innovation-Decision Process

The participants affirmed that in the course of trying to establish authority in the social media unit, they had to connect with the major funding bodies of the libraries. According to participants, such strategy helps in a greater way to maintain communication and leverage the social media platforms which are also to the libraries' advantages. Shock, the head of media C, maintains that: "... interaction with the parent body is necessary in order to maintain sanity and earn support and authority from users of our platforms. Shock .Rem, head of media A, recounted the interference of the management as a strategy adopted to control social media content in the academic library with the mission to earn users' trust, reputation and social authority. "... Must of the time social media contents are being verified and cautioned our activities by the university and the library management ... Rem.

Other participants (Bippa, Librarian I, C; Kuh, University Librarian, B; and Jah, Librarian II, A), acknowledge the involvement of the university/library management as they provide information and instruction on the types of social media contents for their libraries. The excerpts: *I receive a directive from the library management of every piece of information we are to relate to the customers of the library on our platforms.* Bippa.

shahh... dai... all information and contents that need to be addressed and share with the public, we were instructed that we should record them and forward them to the management for rectification... Kuh.

We mostly comply with the university's directives and always make sure that all things we do conform to the university and the library management decision... Jah.

Authoritative innovation process does not give room for the social media librarian to exercise his/her choice of content freely. Contrary to optional and collective innovation, the authority decision making on contents are two separate entity. The university management occupies the highest authority in the decision-making process. Their position influences them to enforce the social media unit to conform to their decision in whatever way they feel. The social media unit of the library often suffers pressures to change or suspend social media contents based on the belief or the behavior of the management of the university.

Research Question 2: What are the Restraints of Social Media Authority in Academic Libraries?

There is evidence of frantic effort on the academic libraries and librarians in maintaining trust and authority in the social media unit of the academic libraries. The participants express the dimensions of their struggle to maintain followers on their platforms. However, the researcher investigates to know the difficulties the social media unit experience in terms of trust, reputation, and establishing social media authority in the academic libraries. Interviewees stated various reasons that depict barriers to successful social media authority in the academic libraries as presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Deterrents of Librarians in gaining social media authority

S/No.	Themes	Participants Statements
A	Behavioral' attitudes	"... severally, librarians turn the platform into personal usage..."... they use the platforms to engage their colleagues on unnecessary dialogue and confrontation..."... librarians' response to queries that they do not have the knowledge or ideas about..."
B	Annoyance	"... I often get angry with the kind rude and bad manners of comments from different members of staff in the social media unit..."... I become upset if there is no feedback on my posts ... I feel rejected ... and go off in utilizing the platforms.
C	Nervousness	"... I have stopped using our Facebook because of the incapable into the responses to me at the time I need an answer..."... some of us are very apprehensive towards ICT especially social media applications in the library."
D	Lack of teamwork	"... some individuals behind-the-scene are working against the adoption of social media..." "... even among the librarians at the top-level..." "... I notice that librarians are not working as a team ..." "... this has resulted in lack of organized content ..."
E	Inappropriate content	"... I ironically, I have observed that social media in our library lack content. It is believed that social media triumphs on content. If there are no contents you will certainly don't have followers and there will be no trust..."... social media build it authority with content..."
F	Lack of Adequate Support from Management	"... mmm huh... the university management is not providing institutional barking..."... unfortunately, some of the librarians adopt social media applications on their own..."... we desire training and retraining but we are not given the opportunities ..."
G	No identified social media policy	"... In our library, there is no written down rules or policy for the social media applications. ..."... the main library has no guiding principles for social media ... and I cannot remember seeing it in any of our branches..."... there is no written policy, but the practices kept been maintained on and on with those that came before us, and we took after them ..."... most of the things posted on Facebook were based on our experiences as information providers..."

Table 2 summarises the dissatisfaction and or the deterrent of the academic librarians' attitudes in earning trust, building a reputation, and maintaining social authority in the social media units of the academic libraries. Participants reveal that librarians turn social media platforms into personal usage. The platform that is meant for the library, the librarians use them to engage their colleagues in unnecessary dialogue and confrontation. Participants believe that there are different social media platforms for different kinds of media. Unfortunately, many are not aware and as such, they create content on different issues that are not meant on the customer's preference. Such attitudes in the social media arena mostly discredit the social media units in maintaining trust, reputation, and authority.

Furthermore, participants believe that content is the hallmark of attraction for followers in the social media units. Some lament that the content of social media is not convincing and is not attractive to the customers. A participant stated: *"... I have observed that social media in our library lack contents. It is my belief that social media triumph over the content. If there are no contents you will certainly don't have followers and there will be no trust. So, the social media unit builds its authority with content.* Bippa. While another participant felt that the social media librarians are not working as a team. *"I notice that we (librarians) are not working as a team. This has brought about the lack of organizing content on our platforms. This has also led to distrust and a lack of authority on our social media platforms.* Shock.

Participants also stated the rigid involvement of the university management that aims to place embargoes and sanctions on vital content that users have an interest in in the social media platforms. They felt that the management is not actually given full support for the social media units to be self-regulatory in terms of sourcing and disseminating information for the users. This also results in a lack of support on matters such as finance, staffing and training, and inadequate infrastructure for the social media in the academic libraries.

Participants also commented on the non-existence of policies in the social media units. Although that does not stop the functions of the units, however, the non-existence of social media policy

guidelines is a deterrent to social supremacy. According to them, the librarians kept maintaining on what they inherited from their successors and added also from their work experiences.

Discussion

This research investigates the academic libraries/librarians' activities in creating trust and reputation in order to earn social authority in academic libraries in Nigeria. The research employed Rogers's 2010 innovation-decision process to explore academic libraries/librarians' position and attitude toward social media authority in selected Nigerian academic libraries. Findings indicate that academic libraries and librarians in Nigeria are engaged in establishing credible content on their social media platforms as a result of the information explosion on the Internet. More also, it shows that the selected academic libraries in Nigeria are shifting focus from the traditional method of checking the authority and validity of information to an entirely new way of assessing reliability and validity of content in order to establish trust, reputation, and social authority. This is in line with Bradley (2015) that, social media has changed the way in which society works and especially the way librarians are doing their jobs. The study found academic libraries and librarians to have kept close interaction through sharing of social media links with other libraries for the purpose of gaining trust, reputation, and social authority. This concise with (Chu and Du, 2013) that the frontier strategy of social media involves interacting, sharing, building, and cultivating a community of interest within the platforms. Such activities aim at maintaining a consistent standard of content and authority on the social media platforms in the academic libraries.

The research found that in selected Nigerian academic institutions, librarians interact among themselves and the users on social media platforms purposely to promote awareness, build contacts, and as a well social authority. Invariably, academic libraries and librarians command authority in the social media units of the libraries as many users engaged on the social media platforms of their libraries (Bradley, 2015). Activities such as honesty and sincerity, proper evaluation of quality content and sources of information adequately, studying the users' needs in the academic environment to identify the

interest of the scholars, researchers, and regular users of the platforms are done in the social media units to earn the users' trust and gain reputation and authority of contents. Also, for the purpose to despise rumours and misinformation of data/contents, librarians undertake verification of sources of information by searching other platforms and databases to establish the validity and accuracy of the content. In the selected Nigerian academic institutions, social media librarians work hand-in-glove with the university management in most of their activities in order not to set division and disparity in the academic environment. The social media units ensure their readiness in complying with the management directives in every piece of content posted on social media platforms. These actions are taken purposely to sustain the social media units so to earn trust and gain reputation and social media authority.

Despite the evidence of positive actions and experience of librarians' strategies to earn social media trust and reputation in order to maintain authority, there are often impediments constituted the flow of social media authority in the academic libraries. This mostly boils down to the academic librarians' attitudes as expressed by the participants. Eagly and Chaiken (1993) described the attitude as a psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favor. Some individuals have to stop using the library social media platforms as a result of challenges encountered with the behaviors of the academic librarians controlling the social media units. The usual reasons centered on the librarians' attitudes in managing the social media units of the libraries. The complaints are always such as delay in response to queries, not making use of the platform appropriately, negative responses, low level of ICT, individuals working against the survival of the platforms, inappropriate content, lack of support of the management, among others. Some of the participants reported that they often got angry and become upset with the manners of comments from individuals on the platforms. Some are very apprehensive about social media applications. While others complain about the issue of lack of teamwork among the library staff which they felt that it also affects the reliability and validity of social media content. This in turn also decreases the number of

followers on the platforms because their belief is that social media triumph greatly on content. Where the contents are not convincing, it results in a lack of trust. Lack of trust diminishes the effectiveness of communication (Seeger, 2006; Slovic, 1999). Eventually, the perception of customers toward social media content diminishes as a result of a lack of reputation and social authority.

Consequently, social authority is built on the platter of trust and reputation. According to (Tenopir et al, 2015), trust is characterized by a certain measure of vulnerability, incidentally, vulnerability is being facilitated in the 21st Century through technology. In the same vein, (Corritore, Kracher, and Wiedenbeck, 2003) and (Kelton, Fleischmann, and Wallace, 2008) supported that computers have become part of social interactions so much that they are now objects of trust worldwide while Tenopir et al. (2015) further added that this consequence of technology-driven innovation may apply to websites and social media as well. Therefore, the users' trust and online reputation may all depend on the attached value estimated by the users of the social media content.

Incidentally, the features of the evaluation of social media content to earn users' trust online reputation and authority centered mostly on reliability, consistency, accuracy, timeliness, accessibility, objectivity, usefulness, reputation, and efficiency (Tenopir et al, 2015). Pickard et al, (2011) understood how the content of the information is presented, the type of information, citation, and the reason for posting on the social media platforms. In line with such that Zhao et al. (2012) describes as dangerous, to use mass media with high audience rating but low credibility to release information because it will cause new rumors or irrational behavior of the users. It is expected that information that is wealthy and well-delivered should influence social media users' feedback. Feedback in social media interaction provides scope to express an opinion as it involves the users and the sender of the message (Dennis and Kinney, 1998).

Conclusion and Recommendations

The main objective of this study is to explore the activities of librarians in creating users' trust and online reputation in order to earn social authority in

academic libraries in Nigeria. The study found out that the selected academic libraries establish social media with the purpose of marketing and creating awareness of the library's credibility to the users. The study revealed that the selected academic libraries and librarians have been striving hard to maintain social media authority in terms of contents and services in the libraries. This was evident in participants, demonstrating in various ways of how social authority is been maintained in the academic libraries. All the struggles are to gain users' trust, reputation and maintain social authority in the academic libraries. Irrespective of the struggles, still academic libraries' efforts to maintain trust, earn reputation, and social authority for the social media units have been very low. This is a result of librarians' social attitudes towards social media, academic librarians' apprehension and lack of adequate knowledge of ICT, and excessive level of control from the management among others (Agyekum, Arthur, and Trivedi, 2016; Akporhonor and Olise, 2015).

However, a standard strategy to verify the information is important regardless of the type of social media outlet. Hill (2016) remarks that "without a strategy, content is just stuff, and the world has enough stuff. Academic librarians ought to effectively strategise on the kind of content their customers have passionate as they follow their comments and responses. The content created will spread as the customers share it across which can give birth to *social authority* and establishes users' trust and reputation, provided the content created is informative, well written, and is of good value to the customers. The academic librarians should not shy away from being *contents conscious* in the social media units. It is paramount for social media librarians to define the purpose of the social media platforms in the library. It could be for education, awareness, entertainment or to be used to market the library activities. It is important also, to maintain constant checking of the social media homepage. The social media librarians should first trust the homepage and the contents with the assurance of its relevance to the intended audience. Bradley (2015) acknowledges that people believe and trust information professionals. Thus, he further advised

that librarians can leverage that trust by becoming beacons, pointing to good-quality information, irrespective of its origin. Meanwhile, if your customers know your firm authority on a given platform they will always be attracted to your website. Hence, authority attracts traffic and establishes a ranking in the social media arena (Bradley, 2015).

As the universe embraces the flow of information on the internet, (Zohoorian-Fooladi and Abrizah, 2014) advise that, librarians should understand how best to harness these technologies to enhance library services. Bearing in mind that the use of social media platforms has become inescapable in the lives of individuals in the 21st generation. Academic librarians should be compelled to demonstrate the spirit of honesty in diverse means which include knowing the users they serve and working *teeth-and-tight* with their parents' bodies in order to be trusted, earn reputation and possess social authority on social media content in the academic libraries. This calls for teamwork, professional experts in social media in LIS to interact professionally in order to reduce criticism on their social media content for the purpose of gaining users' trust, online reputation, and social authority. The fact is that, once trust is absent in social media content, there is the tendency of reinforcing distrust by users of the platforms which can also affect social media reputation and authority in the academic libraries. This formed part of the challenges of academic librarians in the social media environment.

Although this research is able to identify the activities of academic libraries/librarians in creating users' trust, reputation in order to maintain social media authority in academic libraries using Rogers 2010 Diffusion of Innovation. It is a qualitative research approach and is limited to only three university libraries in Nigeria. More study on other types of libraries will shade more light on how imminent are activities and attitudes of librarians are in creating users' trust, online reputation and social media authority in library services. Also, the study can be repeated to include more academic libraries globally in order to enhance more literature on users' trust, reputation, and social media authority in the library and information science profession.

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