

Facebook as a Communication Tool in University Libraries: A Case Study

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ABSTRACT

The implementation of social media in libraries is in its initial stage, particularly in India. It is the necessity of libraries and the need of the hour to implement this technology effectively in libraries. The main objective of the study was to know the role of Facebook, a popular social media platform. It is also tried to understand the participation of users by liking, commenting, and sharing library posts posted on Facebook. Data was collected through content analysis and structured online and offline questionnaires from 638 respondents from the users of Vivekananda Library, Maharshi Dayanand University, Rohtak. It was found that 21982 users reached the library's Facebook page. A total number of 1623 likes, 1011 link clicks, 36 comments, and 59 library posts were shared by users. A significant percentage, 30.4% of males and 20.1% of females preferred Facebook to interact with library staff members regarding library services. Facebook is also found to be the most liked social media platform for receiving information about library events and notices. It is also observed that 32.5% of males and 18.4% of females preferred Instagram for Real-Time chat, followed by other platforms and Facebook.

KEYWORDS: Facebook, Social Media, SNSs, Academic Libraries, Web 2.0.

1. INTRODUCTION

Facebook is the most popular and most visited social media platform in the world. A maximum number of 2.936 billion active users were in April 2022 and made the leading social networking site in the world. This data indicates that almost 37% of people on the earth presently use the Facebook social media platform. ([Facebook statistics, 2022](#)). In the 21st century, most people are living in a digital environment, and most human needs are connected digitally to each other. Most of the services are provided online and virtually. Libraries are not an exception and follow the latest trends in technology. LIS professionals and information scientists need to implement social networking sites in universities and other academic libraries." It is understandably exciting to embrace new technology to reach students and staff members, and it is very important to have an understanding of how to utilize the technology to present comments to library users." ([Kenchakkanavar, 2015](#)).

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The implementation of Facebook in the context of academic libraries is a very useful, cost-effective, and efficient tool to provide library services to library users. "Library uses their Facebook page to make themselves more visible" (Roos, 2012). The various studies showed that Facebook is very useful in marketing library services. Libraries can establish their presence in the social media arena.

A lot of study shows that a number of libraries have created a Facebook page for their library to provide library services, awareness, and marketing of their services. (Aharony, 2012) said that libraries use Facebook to disseminate information to users rather than for discussion. According to (Dora Y.T. Chen, 2011), there is a lack of quality interaction between library users and library staff members on Facebook. Privacy issue and the administration of Facebook is also there.

Lack of operating skills, language barrier, and poor internet connectivity are not major issues in the present time, but privacy is an important concern of the users while using social media. Users hesitate in using social networking sites due to their privacy issues. (Edwin & Oboraidjevwe, 2015) explained that the implementation of SNSs in university libraries has changed the mode of information dissemination and utilization of information by library users.

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Social media platforms are very effective for the marketing of libraries and their services. Marketing of any product is very important for its success. Information and services are just like the product of the library, and there is a great need for marketing these products. "Those libraries that are using Facebook are using it mainly to market the library, push out an announcement to library users, post photos, provide chat reference, and have a presence in a social network. These libraries feel positive about the future success of their Facebook presence" (Hendrix et al., 2009).

(Junco, 2015) explored in his study that senior students have spent significantly less time on Facebook in comparison to junior students. It is also observed that the use of Facebook developed new connections in their college and research field and focused on multitasking while using Facebook. (Lam et al., 2019) investigated the current Facebook usage among seven university libraries in Hong Kong. It is found in this study that most of the libraries in Hong Kong adopted Facebook social media platform as a communication and marketing tool.

(Noushia, 2011) explored that Facebook is an effective tool for information dissemination and very helpful in spreading awareness among LIS professionals. Facebook emphasizes online collaboration and sharing because Facebook has some unique features which are users centric. (Phillips, 2015) investigated the perception and attitude of librarians towards social networking sites as a tool for academic libraries. Social media provide an opportunity for the LIS professional to engage and support young potential users.

(Derani & Naidu, 2016) gather arguments and counter-arguments about the effective use of various types of social media that an organization can use in a crisis, preparedness, response, and recovery. (Pirshahid et al., 2016) found in their study that librarians were well aware of the social networking tools, RSS feed, but instant messaging was less used in the libraries. (Das & Mahapatra, 2018) analyzed Facebook content and found that sharing photos, links and statuses were a major type of posts posted on Facebook. Posting videos and creating events were hardly done by the libraries.

3. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY AREA

The university library came into existence as Vivekananda Library on 22 June 1990. It is the heart of the Maharshi Dayanand University NAAC 'A+' grade university, established in 1976 by Act No. 25 of 1975 of the Haryana Legislative Assembly. This university was awarded No. 1 cleanest university in India in 'Swachhhta Ranking' in the year 2018 in the state government university category and awarded 76th rank in India in the NIRF ranking released by the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) Govt. of India.

The Vivekananda Library is a state-of-the-art university library. It has a huge collection of knowledge resources, print as well as e-resources. Resources at a glance, i.e., 405720 print books, 17500 theses and dissertations, 59450 bound volumes of journals. In addition to these print resources, 57030 e-books and 11173 e-journals are subscribed by the library. All e-resources and other leading databases, old question papers, etc., can be accessed through elibrary mobile app also. More than ten thousand users from every corner of the country obtained the library membership.

4. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Social media has been developed extensively in the present digital world. Now it is difficult for the traditional library to survive among the tech-savvy generation. Libraries are trying to implement SNSs to provide library services to their users. Various studies have focused on the role of Facebook in providing library services. The present study tries to find out the particular library service which can be provided through Facebook effectively.

5. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The findings of the study would be very useful for the university libraries to decide what kinds of particulars library services can be provided with the help of Facebook, a leading social networking site among youth. The results of the study would be helpful in improving the quality of the existing library services provided through different social media communication tools.

6. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- ✓ To capture the number of posts posted by the library and reach between 18 November 2019 to 30 May 2022;
- ✓ To know the engagement, like share and comments by the library users on various library posts posted on the Library Facebook page;
- ✓ To find out the most suitable social media platform for Real-Time Chat;
- ✓ To recognize the most liked SNS to receive information about library notices/events;
- ✓ To know the most preferred social media platform to interact with the library staff members.

7. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- i. How many posts were posted by the library and reached during the period 18 November 2019 to 30 May 2022?
- ii. What is the engagement, likes, share, and comments rate on library posts?

- iii. Which is the most suitable social media platform for Real-Time chat?
- iv. Which is the most liked SNS to receive information about library notices/ events?
- v. Which is the most preferred social media platform to interact with library staff members?

8. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

A research design is a road map for the researcher to accomplish the research task. According to (Kerlinger, 1986), "A research design is a plan, structure, and strategy of investigation so conceived as to obtain an answer to research question or problems. The plan is the complete scheme or program of the research. It includes an outline of what the investigator will do from writing the hypotheses and their operational implication to the final analysis of data". Research design is basically a guideline for the research.

In the present study, the opinions of the respondents and the data analysis of content uploaded or posted on the Facebook social media platform by the library were required. So the survey method and content analysis were found most suitable for the present study, and both methods were adopted for the present study.

8.1 Statistical Estimation and Sample Size

There are many methods available to decide the sample size of the study. Some sample size calculators are also available on the internet. These are very easy to use and very useful also. Any researcher can use it easily and can decide the sample size accordingly. According to (Manheim, 1977), "a sample is a part of the population which is studied in order to make inferences about the whole population."

The Yamane formula is used to calculate the most appropriate sample size for the study according to known population size and preferred values of margin of error in the result. This formula has given by Taro Yamane, a mathematical statistician, in 1970.

Formula is as under:

Where, 'n' is the sample size, 'N' is the total population and 'e' is error of margin or confidence level. In this way the sample size for the current study would be

$$\begin{aligned}n &= 10000/1+10000 (0.05)^2 \\ &= 10000/1+10000(0.0025) \\ &= 10000/1+25 \\ &= 10000/26 \\ n &= 384.615\end{aligned}$$

In this way, according to the above formula, for a population of 10000, a sample size of 385 in the round figure would be appropriate for the study.

Table 1 Number of questionnaires Received thorough offline and online mode

Total No. of Print Questionnaire Distributed	900	Online Questionnaire Link Shared	254	Complete Valid Questionnaire Considered for Analysis
Received Filled Questionnaire	549		136	638
Incomplete	47		0	
Total Valid Questionnaire	502		136	
Return Percentage of Valid Questionnaire	55.78%		53.54%	

Total numbers of nine hundred print questionnaires were distributed among the respondents. Out of these nine hundred questionnaires, five hundred forty-seven filled questionnaires were received. Forty-seven questionnaires were found incomplete. Total valid and complete print questionnaires were five hundred two. The online link of the pre-framed questionnaire was shared with two hundred fifty-four respondents through different modes of communication like Gmail, Whatsapp, and Facebook. One hundred thirty-six filled questionnaires were received online. The total number of print and online questionnaires considered for analysis understudy was six hundred thirty-eight. Out of these six hundred thirty-eight questionnaires, 55.78% were printed and 53.54% online.

8.2 Data Analysis

Data analysis is used when referring to a numerical trait of a sample collected from the research population. In the library, this data might be circulation, registration, or visitors statistics. This numeric data can be calculated, and the researcher can observe the mean, median, mode, or percentage of the population. Two types of statistics are basically used in the current type of study, i.e., descriptive and inferential statistics.

According to (Gupta & Gupta, 2017), "Descriptive statistics are used to describe the basic features of the data. It is the term given to the analysis of data that helps describe, show or summarize data in a meaningful way. Descriptive statistics enable us to present the data in a more meaningful way, which allows a simpler interpretation of the data. When we use descriptive statistics, it is useful to summarize our group of data using a combination of tabulated description (i.e., tables), graphical description (i.e., graphs and charts), and statistical commentary (i.e., a discussion of the results)."

On the other hand, inferential statistics simply allow a researcher to make a prediction on the basis of the result of data collected from the population. As per the requirement of the current study, both descriptive and inferential statistics were used. The collected data were coded and entered in the SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) and analyzed. American Psychological Association (APA) 7th edition is used for references and citations.

9. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Table 2 Status of posts, reach, likes, engagement, comments, and share

Type of Post	No. of Post	Reach	Like	Engagement	Comment	Share
Article Links	4	2100	135	136	13	0
Photos	13	3175	196	135	4	7
New Arrival	39	2123	205	30	3	5
OPAC	2	584	18	43	0	5
Videos	3	435	22	24	0	0
Tutorial Videos	23	3466	172	205	1	4
Notices	34	6863	469	205	11	35
Events	9	3236	406	244	4	6
Total	127	21982	1623	1022	36	62

Table 2 presents the status of posts which indicates that during the specified period, a total number of one hundred twenty-seven posts were posted, and a healthy number of twenty-one thousand nine hundred eighty-two users reached on library Facebook Page. One thousand six hundred twenty-three users liked, one thousand twenty-two engaged, thirty-six comments, and sixty-two users shared the library posts. Maximum of 35 posts related to the notices shared by the users and a maximum of 11 comments also given on the same posts. (Landis, 2008)

Table 3 The Most Suitable Social Media for Real-Time Chat

Gender	Social Networking Sites					Total
	Twitter	YouTube	Facebook	Instagram	Any Other	
Male	12.6	12.2	28.1	26.6	20.5	459
Female	5.6	12.6	19.1	31.5	31.2	340
Total	77	99	194	229	200	799

Table 3 shows the data pertaining to the most suitable social media for Real-Time Chat, which indicates that seven hundred ninety-nine responses were received in this regard. Out of these, four hundred fifty-nine responses were from male respondents and three hundred forty from female respondents. According to the responses, Instagram emerged as the first choice with two hundred twenty-nine responses, 31.5% from the females' side and 26.6% from the male respondents. The second highest responses were in favor of any other social media, i.e., two hundred. Data shows that 31.2% of females and 20.5% of males selected this option. Facebook is the third choice of the respondents, with one hundred ninety-four responses. Out of these, 28.1% of males and 19.1% of females considered Facebook as the most suitable social media for real-time chat.

Table 4 The Most Like SNSs to Receive Information about Library Events/Notices

Gender	Social Networking Sites					Total
	Twitter	YouTube	Facebook	Instagram	Any Other	
Male	10.7	20.7	32.5	18.8	17.3	468
Female	10.4	23.9	18.4	23.7	23.7	376
Total	89	187	221	177	170	844

Table 4 shows that data pertaining to the most liked social networking sites to receive information about library events/notices gender-wise obtained eight hundred forty-four responses from the respondents. Out of these responses, four hundred sixty-eight responses were received from males and three hundred seventy-six responses from females. Facebook is the first choice of the respondents to receive information about library events/notices with two hundred twenty-one responses. The maximum responses were 32.5% received from males and 18.4% from females. Data indicates that the second choice is YouTube, with one hundred eighty-seven responses out of these 23.9% responses from females and 20.7% from males. Instagram was found as the third choice for the purpose with one hundred seventy-seven responses. A maximum of 23.7% of females and 18.8% of males were in favor of Instagram.

Table 5 The Most Preferred Social Media Platform to Interact with Library Staff

Gender	Social Networking Sites					Total
	Twitter	YouTube	Facebook	Instagram	Any Other	
Male	11.6	19.8	30.4	15.3	22.9	450
Female	11.4	26.5	20.1	15.2	26.8	343
Total	91	180	206	121	195	793

Table 5 shows that seven hundred ninety-three responses were given for the most preferred social media platform to interact with library staff. Out of these 793 responses, four hundred fifty responses were received from males and three hundred forty-three from females. The maximum responses of two hundred six were in favor of Facebook, and out of these, 30.4% were responses from males, and 20.1% were responses from females. The second choice of the most preferred social media platform to interact with library staff is different from YouTube, Instagram, and Twitter, because one hundred ninety-five responses were in favor of any other option. Out of these 195 responses, 26.8% were female, and 22.9% the male.

10. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

It is found in the study that a maximum number of users, 6863, were reached on library notice posts. Maximum number of like 406, engagement 244 comments 11 and 35 post shares were also of library posts. A maximum of 39 posts were posted of new arrival alerts, followed by 23 notices and tutorial videos 23. In this connection (Dora Yu Ting Chen et al., 2012) found in their study that 53.41% of posts were posted on Facebook related to information dissemination, and 28.34% of posts on knowledge sharing were posted on Facebook.

Instagram is the first choice of the respondents for Real-Time-Chat. Facebook is the most liked SNS to receive information about library notices and events. (Obi et al., 2018) was also conducted a study and underlie that Facebook is the most favorite communication tool.

It is also observed in the current study that maximum respondents preferred Facebook as the most suitable social media platform for interaction with the library staff members. (Winn et al., 2016) conducted a study and found that Facebook is the most preferred choice of communication and more suitable for the library for providing library services.

CONCLUSION

The result of the study shows that regular posting on the library's Facebook page encourages the library users, and they respond to the posts and likes if they found useful for them. There is a need to give special attention to managing the library's Facebook page. Reach of the users on a Facebook page indicates that there is a great possibility of attracting potential users. One of the most important pieces of information about library notices and events can be disseminated effectively, quickly, and verbatim through Facebook. Short reference services, a Yes/No type response to the query of library users, and other library-related issues can be resolved with the help of Facebook. In some of the previous studies, it was found that users were restricted to like library photos and very few on other library posts. But the results of the current study are very encouraging and positive for the libraries; hence libraries should create their own library Facebook Page and use it as a communication tool for providing library services.

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