Web 2.0 and Semantic Web Technologies: Usage of Social Media in Major University Libraries in Sri Lanka: With Special Reference to Face book

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***Abstract* - Social media has revolutionized means and modes of communication and has created a new information culture. As such social media has to be integrated in promoting library services and resources of the university libraries. An attempt to explore the usage of social media by university libraries was undertaken. The objectives of the study were to explore social networking tool usage in libraries with special reference to Facebook, to investigate the academic librarians' attitudes towards the usefulness of Facebook as a social media networking tool, and to explore the problems/ issues related to using Facebook as a library promotional tool. This study was designed using quantitative research methodology. The data collection methods were postal questionnaire and observations. All 19 national university librarians were taken as study population. Facebook Pages belongs two libraries were observed under the following criteria: date of establishment, number of fans, basic information of the respective library they share, promoting the library services, important web links given etc.**

The response rate of 94.7% overall may be considered sufficient to allow valid conclusions to be drawn. 66.7% of the librarians were in the opinion that using a Facebook page in promoting library resources and services is important and another 33.3% said it is very important. Only 16.7% of the libraries own a Facebook Page for libraries, and rest of the libraries (83.3%) do not own such a page.

***Keywords:* Facebook usage; Library Marketing; Library Promotion; Perception of Librarians; Social Media**

I.INTRODUCTION

Social media has revolutionized means and modes of communication and has created a new information culture. According to literature surveyed number of definitions of social networking exists. According to Alexander (2006) "Social networking can encompass almost all collaborative environments employing Web 2.0 technologies". The beauty of Web 2.0 technologies is that they improve collaborative work among users, which generates new thinking and strategies to meet the demands of the changing society as found by Chu and Kennedy, (2011). As defined by Boyd and Ellison (2007).

Facebook is an online social networking site. Facebook is the colloquial name given by students to a directory in Harvard University. Initially it was created as a way for those Harvard University students to keep in touch over the Internet and get to know each other better. Mark Zuckerberg and his colleagues gave birth to Facebook on 4th February 2004.

As the popularity of Facebook gradually grow, education sector specialist are seeing its potential for use in education since they believe that social networking sites may have the ability to promote both active learning and collaboration. Use of Facebook as an educational tool that has been highlighted negatively and positively by educationists.

Not only in education, has importance of Facebook to libraries already been discussed in library literature. Most of such studies highlight the potentials of Facebook in promoting library visibility and assume its possibilities of connecting library services to library users, (Xia, 2009). As such, Facebook can be integrated into library marketing efforts, nowadays even in developing countries such as Sri Lanka. This provides a great opportunity for librarians to utilize a low cost/no cost marketing tool for promoting their libraries. According to Farkas (2007) "If libraries are not the first place our prospective users go to do research, they will likely miss any marketing we do on our own Web Sites. This is why we must start looking beyond these sites and toward putting our content where our users actually are".

It is important to explore the perceptions of the university librarians in using social networking tools, with special reference to Facebook. Studies depicted that librarians attitudes were positive in using Facebook for library promotion and they strongly believed that social media is an important tool for marketing of library products and services among online information users. Further, it depicted numerous problems to be encountered when using Facebook in university libraries in promoting services and resources of the libraries concerned; and also interact with their student population.

There is no doubt that increasing use of social media by the Internet users is placing a big challenge to librarians in raising their profile of the libraries; so that keeping their image alive in the mindset of the community they serve which work in a virtual environment. Statistics have shown the tremendous use of social media sites by the users all around the globe. Today academic library clientele such as undergraduates and postgraduate students are less dependent upon the traditional library of course. With the availability of e-resources and Internet resources student very rarely visit their libraries. Hence, many academic librarians are much keen in reaching students in their preferred environments so that they can extend library services beyond the traditional library walls.

Although social media tools such as Facebook are available to university librarians in Sri Lanka, there is a prevalence of low usage by them for promoting their library resources and services. Undoubtedly, increasing the visibility of their library through high technologies has become a challenge for librarians in Sri Lanka

Review of the literature shows that in Sri Lanka not a single study has been conducted so far to explore the ways for librarians to market their services and products among their library clientele who are available in online social space even off campus. Hence, it is timely to explore the attitudes of academic librarians in using Facebook in marketing library resources and services, taking into consideration the problems and challenges faced by them in this respect.

Therefore, the present study is an effort to fill this gap in the library and information science literature by examining how academic libraries utilize this social networking tool for promoting their library resources and services. Objectives of the study are as follows:

A. General objective

To explore the use of social media networking tools, with special reference to Facebook in academic library settings in 'Sri Lanka Main University Libraries'.

B. Specific objectives

1. To explore social networking tool usage in libraries with special reference to Facebook.
2. To investigate the academic librarians' attitudes towards the usefulness of Facebook as a social media networking tool in promoting library, information resources and services
3. To examine the problems in using Facebook as a social media networking tool for promoting library/ information resources and services of academic libraries attached to universities in Sri Lanka.

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Quantitative research methods were used in the study. Nineteen librarians managing the main libraries attached to National Universities in Sri Lanka were regarded as the study population. Since the study population is small in number, entire population of 19 librarians was expected to provide the data for the study. Two types of research instruments namely; questionnaire and observations were used in this study. The questionnaire consisted of 11 questions mainly with structured close-ended questions and attitude scales. Structured close-ended types of questions were used as they are usually characterized by a group of fixed responses that are designed to reflect various views. From the researcher's point of view attitude scales were designed to get a variety of opinions about attitudes towards using Facebook for library promotion.

Each questionnaire was checked to ensure integrity and clarity of response. Data was first tabulated manually and then entered into the SPSS Ver. 20 software package. Frequency counts and percentages for each category were tabulated. Looking at associations among two or more variables in order to draw conclusions, 'Likert Method of Summated Rating' (Boone & Boone 2012) was used. Observed the Internet through the World Wide Web (WWW), in order to get an insight into the manner in which Sri Lankan university librarians are using library Facebook in order to promote their libraries.

The proposed study is basically to find out attitudes or perceptions of librarians towards Facebook use in university libraries. Due to time constraint researcher could not look into the library user perception or how they evaluate the usage of Facebook for library use.

III.ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

A.The Response

Out of 19 questionnaires that were sent out, 18 completed questionnaires were returned. Hence, the response rate was 94.7%. (Table I). The response rate overall may be considered sufficient to allow valid conclusions to be drawn.

TABLE I DISPLAY OF RESPONSES FROM THE LIBRARIANS

Questionnaires sent	19	%
Questionnaires received	18	94.7

B. Demographic Details of Respondents

Over 27.8% of the Librarians had years of experience in their respective professions between 25-30 years. There were 11.1% librarians with more than 30 years of service. Librarians with experience range from 15-20 year of service were 33.3%. It is observed that the female respondents (66.7%) had out-numbered the males (33.3%). Majority of the librarians holds Masters Level degrees (67%) and 22% of them were PhD degree holders. It was observed that 11% of them were first degree holders and the researcher observed that they were at the time of the study were acting in the position of librarian of the respective university as given below in Fig. 1.

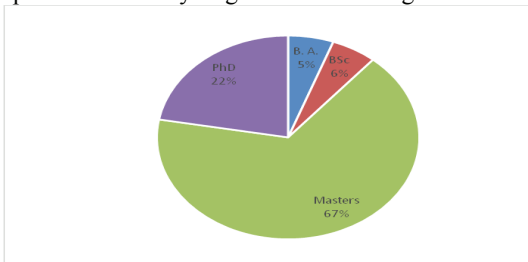

Fig. 1 Level of education of the librarians

C. Use of Facebook

Respondents revealed that they (83.3%) owned a personal Facebook account while 16.7% admitted that they do not own a personal Facebook Account. (Fig. 2)

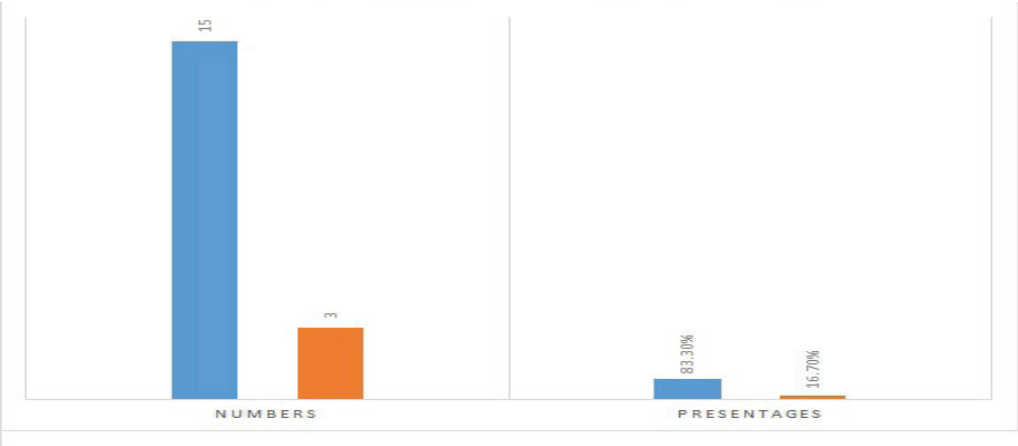

Fig. 2 Ownership of a personal Facebook account

D. Observations on two library Facebook pages maintained by respondents

As mentioned earlier 18 librarians responded to the survey, resulting 94.7% response rate and only 16.7% admitted that they owned a library Facebook page. Rest of the libraries does not maintain a Facebook page. Number of libraries which adopt Facebook page is very low. Out of the 3 libraries that adopt Facebook pages, two libraries are doing well in posting numerous activities undertaken by the respective libraries and creating awareness among the target audience on the activities of the respective libraries. Researcher had found that the 3rd library Facebook page does not exist now. There are anecdotal evidences to say that certain authorities had requested the respective persons to close down the Facebook pages. Although three university libraries that had admitted that they maintained Facebook page for the library, only two libraries maintain a Facebook page as shown below (Table II).

TABLE II LIBRARY FACEBOOK USAGE

Institution	**Year of Establishment**	**Current No of Fans (as at 2014-06-05)**
University Library Facebook No. 1	2009	1480
University Library Facebook No. 2	2013	1002
2	Total	2482

Currently said two library pages have total of 2482 fans. Both of these pages had included the contact details such as telephone number, e-mail address and the website. Other basic details such as mission, description of the library are also depicted in the pages. Both pages are keen in promoting library events such as exhibitions, extension services, reading camps and seminars organized by the respective libraries from time to time. They had even given important links to other websites so that library users can get access to information through the Facebook page. It is an indication that the two Facebook pages acts as a 'Library portal' too. Although there are no ongoing events, the libraries had organized number events in the past which depicted on the wall of the pages. One remarkable observation made by the researcher is that, one of the library had organized library extension activities for the kids in the area where the library is located, such as 'Art Classes', 'Story Telling', 'Language learning', 'Reading Camps', and 'Child development programs' and had given publicity to these events through the library Facebook page. One page had 1908 photos on wall and the other page had 136 photos; they are actually can be treated as 'photo-essays of the particular events' organized by the respective libraries. One page had included 34 videos on wall which are valuable resources on science and technology.

TABLE III POSTS ON WALL WITH GENERAL COMMENTS OR 'LIKES' OF TWO FACEBOOK PAGES

Institution	No. of Posts (as at 2014-06-05)
No. 1	192
No. 2	19

TABLE IV COMMENTS ON FACEBOOK WALL

Wall posts with and without 'Likes'	Total No. of Posts	Percentage
Without likes or general comments	93 Posts	44.1
With likes or general comments	118 Posts	55.9
Total	211	100

According to the Table III above the two libraries Facebook pages had collectively produced 211 wall postings. Out of

the total 44.1% of the postings are without 'Likes' or general comments. Almost 56% of the postings were with 'Likes' or general comments.

Another vital observation made by the researcher is the low level member participation in discussions on Facebook walls. Other than general comments or congratulatory remarks no discussions are seems to be going on in any of these Facebook wall pages.

Librarians' opinions about using Facebook page in promoting library services and resources are shown in the Table IV below.

TABLE IV OPINION OF USING FACEBOOK PAGE IN PROMOTING LIBRARIES

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Important	12	66.7
Very Important	6	33.3
Total	18	100.0

According to the Table IV above university librarians' attitudes were positive about Facebook page usage in Sri Lanka libraries for library promotion, because they believe that Facebook is a very effective tool for promoting library services. While 66.7% said it is important another 33.3% were in the opinion that it is very important factor for library promotion.

As revealed in Table V below 55.6% librarians were in the opinion that Facebook usage trends in libraries will grow slowly but 33.3% of them strongly believe that Facebook usage in libraries in Sri Lanka will expand quickly in the future. Only 5.6% think that Facebook usage will stay slow in Sri Lanka.

TABLE V OPINION OF FACEBOOK USAGE TRENDS IN SRI LANKA

Responses	Frequency	Percent
will stay slow	1	5.6
will grow solely	10	55.6
Will expand quickly	6	33.3
Total	17	94.4
Missing	1	5.6
Total	18	100.0

According to the voting of librarians the following areas of Facebook usage are to be treated, as top priorities as depicted in Table VI below.

TABLE VI SUGGESTED PURPOSES OF WHICH UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES SHOULD USE FACEBOOK PAGES

Statements	Votes	%
Promote library products and services	16	88.9
Provide quick updates to users	12	66.7
Promote user education programs	11	61.1
Disseminate library news and press releases	09	50.0
Build discussion groups and collaborative work	08	44.4

Table VII below presents the attitudes of librarians towards the effectiveness of the Facebook in promoting library resources and services.

TABLE VII LIBRARIANS ATTITUDES TOWARDS FACEBOOK USAGE

Sl.No.	Statements	Strongly Agreed	Agree	No opinion	disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	Facebook as a social media tool is an integral part for promoting library services and resources	6 (33.3%)	10(55.6%)	2(11.1%)	0	0
2	Facebook will not help librarians to get closer to the library clientele	1(5.6%)	2(11.1%)	1(5.6%)	10(55.6%)	4(22.2%)
3	Facebook helps librarians in building collaborative network with library users	6(33.3%)	11(61.1%)	0	1(5.6%)	0
4	Facebook will not help university students to use library	2(11.1%)	2(11.1%)	3(16.7%)	7(38.9%)	4(22.2%)
5	Facebook helps students in identifying and locating library resources	2(11.1%)	9(50.0%)	4(22.2%)	1(5.6%)	2(11.1%)
6	Facebook will not help in promoting distance learning	0	1(5.6%)	2(11.1%)	10(55.6%)	5(27.8%)
7	Facebook will not facilitate knowledge sharing	0	1(5.6%)	1(5.6%)	10(55.6%)	6(33.3%)
8	Facebook offers more than just traditional ways of marketing library services and resources	9(50.0)	7(38.9%)	2(11.1%)	0	0
9	Facebook facilitate providing user with information	7(38.9%)	10(55.6%)	0	1(5.6%)	0
10	Facebook is not a great way to grab the attention of new users	0	5(27.8%)	2(11.1%)	6(33.3%)	5(27.8%)
11	Facebook allows students to create, connect, converse, vote and share information	6(33.3%)	10(55.6%)	2(11.1%)	0	0
12	Facebook will not capture potential users of the library	2(11.8%)	3(17.6%)	3(17.6%)	5(29.4%)	4(23.5%)

[Questions 1 – 11: N=18; Question 12: N=17]

It is very clear that the librarians had more favorable attitudes towards using Facebook for library promotion. Views such as Facebook as a tool as an integral part for library promotion, Facebook helps in building collaborating network with library users, Facebook offers more than just traditional ways of marketing, Facebook facilitates in providing user with information and Facebook allows students to create, connect, converse, vote and share information have attracted majority of university librarians.

To test the following assumption further, statements based on the Likert method of summated ratings in Question No. 09 statements were analyzed. As depicted therein, it is evident that university librarians in Sri Lanka have favorable attitudes towards using Facebook for promoting library resources and services.

TABLE VIII TOP FIVE CRUCIAL PROBLEMS/ISSUES RELATED TO USE OF FACEBOOK FOR LIBRARY PROMOTION

Statement No.	Problem/issues	Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
2	Concerns on confidentiality of students information	5.6%	66.7%	16.7%	11.1%	-
10	Lack of time to use Facebook	11.1%	55.6%	22.2%	11.1%	-
3	Lack of privacy and identity theft	16.7%	44.4%	27.8%	11.1%	-
5	Inadequate staff	5.6%	44.4%	-	44.4%	5.6%
7	Slow speed of the internet	16.7%	27.8%	0-	50%	-

As depicted in the above Table VIII a total of 13(72.3%) librarians had identified "Concerns on confidentiality of students' information" as number one problem that they will have to face when using Facebook page for library promotion. As agreed by the librarians (66.7%) the second most concerned problem to them was "Lack of time to use Facebook". "Lack of privacy and identity theft of students joining the library Facebook page" had been identified by the librarians (61.15%) as the third concerned issue. "Inadequate staff of the library to work on the Facebook page of the library" and "Slow speed of Internet" had been cited respectively as fourth and fifth issues related to Facebook use. As observed by the researcher one very crucial problem that university librarians had to face is "Denied access to Facebook by the concerned authorities". Only 11.1% of the total sample population has admitted this as a problem.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

In accordance with the results of the current research in hand, this study provides the following recommendations for further development of Facebook pages for library promotion:

1. All university libraries should include in their strategic plan a social media marketing component too (Chol, 2012).
2. Since the Facebook is very popular among the 'Y-Generation' (covering ages 18-36) and they are available in the cyber space 24/7 basis even off-campus, it is strongly recommended that all university libraries should take necessary steps to establish their own Facebook pages and thereby available in the space where the student are present. Then it is much easier for the library to get the messages across to their target population.
3. SLLA, NILIS and the University of Kelaniya, Department of Library and Information Science which are the leading organizations that are responsible for delivering professional library science courses in Sri Lanka should emphasize on the practical use of social media for library promotion/library marketing (Hendrix, 2009).
4. One particular library staff member should be held responsible of managing the library Facebook throughout.
5. Librarians need to educate their users, provide them assistance if needed, deliver them resources and also disseminate information which might be useful for their programs and projects in hand through the library Facebook page. (Bradley & McDonald, 2011).
6. It is assumed that users on Facebook want to see variety of photographs. On the other hand every organization will have photo collections in albums. Need to upload them onto the Facebook and tag them. Usually people have Facebook notifications that alert them when they have been tagged on photos, and this will bring them back to the Facebook page of the library and that is how a librarian can gradually build a 'Reference Market' for his/her resources and service. The beauty of Facebook is that by allowing the 'fans' of the page to upload and tag them and friends on library pages automatically establish a social 'hook' to the pages concerned. Not only librarians can give the clientele back by adding photos, librarians can keep their brand planted firmly in the mindset of the respective target audience.
7. Need to make it a best practice to thank people for becoming your fans. Not only that it is absolutely necessary for the librarian to give them something in return, such as an e-newsletter, e-resources etc.

IV CONCLUSION

This study depicts that university librarian's attitudes were positive in using Facebook for the promotion of library resources and services. Those university librarians strongly believe that social media including the Facebook is an important tool for marketing of library products and services. They have realized that it is very useful when they want to communicate with their library clientele in order to cater to their information needs. (Graham, Faise & Hartman, 2009).

The research not only reveals potential plus points but also numerous problems associated with managing a Facebook page for their respective libraries. They were concerned about the confidentiality of student's information. They also admitted problems such as lack of time to use Facebook, lack of privacy and identity theft of students joining the library Facebook page. They were in the opinion that inadequacy of staff capacity of the library to work on the Facebook for the library as one of the problem too.

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