SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES: USE IN LIBRARY AND INFORMATION CENTERS

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Abstract: - *The present paper deals with Social Networking sites. It began in the late 21st century and growing up very fast. Social networks are "the means of communication and sharing information between two or more individuals on an online community. Remarkable point is social networking tools may be used as an interactive platform for Library and Information Science professionals to reaching out their various types of users. Professionals from young generation are more active and feel comfortable through their techno-savvy nature compare to traditional way of serving services. Most of respondent feel that this is easy way to communicate with their user group and also may be using social networking tools for find out the research contents. It is useful for communication within people and for sharing their experiences especially in Library and Information Science. For effective use of Social Networking Sites in library and information centers, training and awareness program should arrange for users and library professionals about applications, benefits, required skills and risks associated with social networking sites. Librarian must take the responsibility of planning, organizing and implementing" social networks in library and information centre.*

Keywords : Emerging Technology, Library and Information Centers, Library and Information Services, Libraries, LIS Professionals, Social Networking Sites (SNS), Social Networks.

1. Introduction

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has brought an excitement in daily operations and services. The advent of information and communication technologies and mobile devices has posed challenges for libraries (Emezie & Nwaohiri, 2016). To support the information needs of the user about micro information about the subject, libraries are more aware to embrace the ICT and social network. Today people are connected with each other by the various social networking sites like Twitter, Face book, LinkedIn, YouTube, MySpace, Blogs, WhatsApp, etc. The social networking sites are commonly known as online communities of personal and professional friends. Now in this 21st century, the online communication sites have become more popular and those are latest online communication tools. The social networking sites provide an extensive variety of resources and services such as blogging, messaging, audio visuals etc. This became an effective medium to

share the knowledge and skills of the users and library professionals. (Roy and Sarkar, 2017) To implement the fourth law of Dr. S.R. Ranganathan "Save the Time of the Users" Social Networking Sites technology is becoming the interest area of libraries, documentation centers, information centers, for implementing new services in libraries and informing their clientele quickly (Sahoo and Sharma, 2015).

2. Definitions

Social networking sites can be broadly defined as an internet or mobile-based social space where people can communicate, connect, create and share content with each others. While we use the term "social network site" to describe this occurrence, the term "social networking sites" also appears in public discourse, and the two terms are often used interchangeably. We chose not to employ the term "networking" for two reasons: emphasis and scope. "Networking" emphasizes relationship initiation, often between strangers. While networking is possible on these sites, it is not the primary practice on many of them, nor is it what differentiates them from other forms of computer-mediated communication. Boyd and Ellison (2007) define "social networking sites as Web-based services that allow individuals to having three common elements (1) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, (2) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and (3) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system. The nature and

nomenclature of these connections may vary from site to site". According to on-line Dictionary of Computing (2011), "Social networking site as any website designed to allow multiple users to publish content of them. The information may be on any subject and may be for consumption by friends, mates, employers, employees just to mention a few." Social Networking Sites as web-based services that allow individuals to construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, to view and navigate their list of connections and those made by others within the system.

3. Types of Social Networking Services

A social networking service or social networking site is a platform to build social networks or social relations among people who share interests, activities, backgrounds or real-life connections. It covers the two main formats – sites that are primarily organized around users' profiles and those that are organized around collections of content. However, it's important to remember that services may be different and characterized by more than one category. Educators setting up private groups in order to make use of collaborative space and tools are a good example of this.

3.1 Profile-based SNS: Profile-based services are primarily organized around members' profile pages. Bebo, Facebook and MySpace, are all good

examples of this. Users often include third party content in order to enhance their profiles, or as a way of including information from other web services and SNS.

3.2 Content-based SNS: In these services, the user's profile remains an important way of organizing connections, but plays a secondary role to the posting of content. Content-based communities include Flicker, Shellfire, and YouTube.com for video-sharing and last.fm, where the content is created by software that monitors and represents the music that users listen to.

3.3 White-label SNS: Most SNS offer some group-building functionality, which allows users to form their own mini-communities within sites. Platforms such as Ning and People Aggregator broadbandmechanics.com. These sites offer members the opportunity to create and join communities. This means that users can create their own "mini-MySpace's"10, small scale social networking sites which support specific interests, events or activities.

3.4 Multi-User Virtual Environments: Sites such as Second Life, an online virtual world, allow users to interact with each other's avatars – a virtual representation of the site member. Although the users have profile cards, their functional profiles are the characters they customize or build and control. There are also

hybrids of these and social-networking sites, such as Habbo Hotel and Cyworld**.**

3.5 Mobile SNS: Many social network sites such as MySpace, MYUBO and Twitter offer mobile phone versions of their services that allowing members to interact with their networks via their phones. Increasingly, too, there are mobile–led and mobile-only based communities allows users to share and view video over mobile networks**.**

3.6 Micro-blogging/ Presence updates: Micro-blogging services such as Twitter and Jaiku allow you to publish short (140 characters, including spaces) messages publicly or within contact groups. They are designed to work as mobile services, but are popularly used and read online. Many services offer 'status updates' – short messages that can be updated to let people know what mood you are in or what you are doing. These can be checked within the site or exported to be read elsewhere. They engage users in constantly updated conversation and contact with their online networks**.**

3.7 People Search: People search is another important web development. There are various kinds of social and people search, but sites like Wink generate results by searching across the public profiles of multiple social network sites allows search by name, interest, location and other information published in profiles and allowing the creation of Web-based "dossiers" on individuals. This type of people search cuts across the

traditional boundaries of social network site membership, although the data that are retrieved should already be public.

4. Benefits of Social Networking Service

There are facts of a broad range of benefits to young people associated with the use of Social Networking Service. Some benefits of the social networking are:

(1) Worldwide Connectivity, (2) Allows us to keep in touch with friends, colleagues and others, (3) Meeting the new people, (4) Commonality of Interest, (5) Searching required information and users, (6) Sharing multiple points of view, (7) Keeping in touch with users in view of their academic and research activities, (8) Linking useful resources, (9) Real-Time Information Sharing, (10) Creating user community or group, (11) Job seeking, (12) Promoting the library professionals in their career development, (13) Free Advertising, (14) Getting feedback, (15) Increased News Cycle Speed, (16) As Media Literacy, (17) Formal Educational Outcomes, (18) Informal Education and Learning, (19) Creativity, (20) Individual Identity and Self-Expression, (21) Strengthening Social Relationships, (22) Belonging and Collective Identity, (23) Building and Strengthening Communities, (24) Civic and Political Participation, (25) Self-Efficacy and Wellbeing, (26) It is cheapest, easier and faster way to keep contact and to collect information, (27) No geographical barriers, (28) Interact and

contact with many users/people in minimum time period (Ansari & Hasan, 2015).

5. Disadvantages of Social Networking Service

(1) No Face to Face Connections, (2) Cyber bullying and Crimes against Children, (3) Corporate Invasion of Privacy, (4) Negative Health Consequences, (5) Diminishing Privacy, (6) Risks of Fraud or Identity Theft, (7) Time Waster, etc.

6. Implications of Social Networking in Library Services

Social networking helps librarian to share information with users very easy in ICT era. Librarian can use social networking for information communication, information distribution and knowledge organization.

6.1 Information Communication: In this process the librarian should keep effective online interaction with users, staff and faculty. Since the social network sites such as MySpace, Facebook, etc. have attracted millions of users. Following are some social networking tools/Social media useful for librarian and researchers:

6.1.1 Blog: Librarian will be able to disseminate information to many users at one time with the help of blog. Researcher can share their research ideas with other academicians and gain feedback from them. Blogs are equivalent to personal web pages.

6.1.2 Facebook: It is (www.facebook.com) frequently used tool of social networking. It provides way in which users build connections

and share information with friends and colleagues. It provides platform for sharing ideas, opinions and scholarly publication.

6.1.3 Linkedin/Online Forums: It is (www.linkedin.com) useful to find information. It enables researcher to discuss issues concerning to their profession e.g. LIS Forum, Google, ILOSC, etc.

6.1.4 MySpace: It is (www.myspace.com) is a popular social networking site. It is useful to make friends, talk online, and share resources.

6.1.5 Twitter: It is (www.twitter.com) useful to keep staff and patrons updated on daily activities, e.g. new arrival, current content services of the library, frequently updated collection.

Some important Social networking sites are Orkut, Hi5, Badoo, Seutumbleupon, Netlog, Ning, Meebo, etc

6.2 Information Distribution: In digital era information sharing is a crucial part. Following networking parts are used for this purpose:

6.2.1 Digg: Digg (www.digg.com) is useful to find content e.g. stories, and share them with others using Digg.

6.2.2 Flicker: This is image distribution tool. It is useful to share collection of images/photos. e.g. collection of photos of seminars, conferences, different programmes of library.

6.2.3 Footnote: It provides access to original historical documents. It is also possible to update them.

6.2.4 SlideShare: It is useful to disseminate information among research community to share their slideshow presentations. It is useful for research and development activities.

6.2.5 StumbleUpon: It is useful to channel surf the internet to find useful content and research tools.

6.2.6 YouTube: It is useful to webcast and promote video library services e.g. videos of library, e-learning tutorials.

6.3 Knowledge Organization

6.3.1 aNobil: This site helps book lovers to share reviews and recommendations. It also prepare discussions, lending, due date alerts.

6.3.2 Connotea: This reference tool allow to save and organize reference links and share them with others.

6.3.3 Del.icio.us: This reference tool is useful to create a custom directory for library users. It is useful to find research links on internet.

6.3.4 lib.rario.us: It is useful to put media such as books, CDs, and offer integration with other tools.

In addition to above services, Library and Information Centers can use the social networking sites for the following services: (1) Announce programmes of the library, (2) Send brief updates, (3) To teach basic search tools for users, (4) Provide links to recommended Internet Resources, (5) Book reviews, information about new books, (6) Book discussions, (7) Provide research tips, (8) Provide entertainment or amusement for users, (9) Provide news or information for librarians and management bodies, (10) to facilitate

collaborations and promote effective communication between Librarians and their patrons, (11) Marketing of library services, (12) Opportunity for users to ask questions regarding library services/Ask a librarian, (13) It will generate a flow of information excluded from search engines and Library Catalogues, (14) It will help Librarians and Libraries to keep pace with technologies and compete effectively with the developed World.(Ayiah and Kumah, 2011).

7. Challenges for Library Professionals while using Social Networking Sites at Library and Information Centers

7.1 Patience: To incorporate Social Networking Sites and their tools to an organization takes time.

7.2 Training: It might be easy but many users from the organization are totally new and not familiar with this application.

7.3 User Orientation: To develop a web-based communication culture user orientation is necessary.

7.4 User Participation: In the beginning usually few users participate in the programme. By training and marketing users can easily train and increase. (Hupp, 2008; Suraweera, 2011)

8. Suggestions to Librarian/Library Professionals:

Application of social networking services are new way of communication, professional connection, making library profiles, providing library services, marketing library services, and getting feedback, etc.

The following are some of the requirements/suggestions to Librarian for proper use of social networking sites at Library and Information Centers: (1) Librarian must know about Social Networking Sites tools and services which may be connected to libraries for different purposes, (2) New and appropriate mean should be discovered and used by Librarian for knowing about new Social Networking Sites tools and services, (3) Librarian should use trusted Social Networking Sites tools and services to establish them as reliable media for libraries, (4) Librarian should use Social Networking Sites tools and services as per need, (5) Librarian should make proper policy prior to use Social Networking Sites tools and services for their libraries for different purposes, (6) Librarian should discover appropriate reasons for using Social Networking Sites tools and services and also incorporate these reasons in their Social Networking Sites policies with proper justifications in connection to convince authorities explicitly to use Social Networking Sites tools and services for libraries, (7) Librarian should explore possibilities to provide other library services to the users through Social Networking Sites tools and services, (8) Librarian should explore possibilities in which other Social Networking Sites tools and services can be used for libraries in most efficient manner, (9) Librarian must think on how to make most effective use of Social Networking Sites tools and services for libraries to enhance their services in demanded formats, achieving goals and building library image among academic community, (10)

Librarian can create a page to reach to users easily, (11) Build network among the interested group for discussion, (12) Librarians should have skills in using Social Networking Sites to provide quality services and maintain role of information officer (Kaushik, 2016).

9. Conclusion

Social Networking Sites is a new technology for libraries. A huge number of users of Library and Information Centers are aware of social networking sites and use these sites for friendly communication. There is great potential in social networking sites for the professional development. Most library professionals are connected to each other by Social Networking Sites to share views and experiences. Proper planning and training is required while pioneering social networks in Libraries. The usage of social networking sites among the students is ever increasing vigorously throughout the world and the approach has been initiated in the modern library's information environment. Social networking sites are very useful in communicating, understanding the needs, and sharing of available resources in libraries. It helps for maximum utility of the library collection and best performance of the services with low budget/cost and good speed of services. Social Networking Sites is the largest platform in the world for sharing the information.

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