

Information Dissemination of Drug Abuse Prevention: the use of Social Media in Federal University Libraries in South-East Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated use of social media in disseminating information on drug abuse prevention by academic librarians in South East Nigeria. A survey research design was used for the study. The population of the study comprised 71 academic librarians working in the four South-East Federal Universities. Questionnaire was used for data collection. Mean and percentages were used for data analysis. The major findings include that 6.35% of university academic librarians in the study area were neither aware that information on prevention of drug abuse could be disseminated through social media nor could academic librarians concern themselves with disseminating information on prevention of drug abuse through social media. Secondly, the study found that Face book was the most frequently used social media for disseminating information on drug abuse preventive measures. The study recommended among others, that each University Library Administration should provide in-service training on use of social media to her academic librarians to enable the latter appreciate effective discharge of core library services through social media.

Key words: Drug abuse, Drug abuse prevention, Federal University Libraries, Information dissemination, Nigeria and Social media,,

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Introduction

Drug abuse is a serious global, public health problem. It constitutes one of the most important risk-taking behaviors among adolescents and young adults. Midford (2010) observed that substance use by young people has long been a concern of western society. Oshodi, Aina and Onajola (2010) reported that substance abuse is rampant among youths between the ages of 18-20 in America and among those aged 16-24 years in the United Kingdom. Substances abused included marijuana, cannabis as well as drinking twice the recommended level of alcohol. In Nigeria, the story is not different, the ever-increasing population and a surge in number of street youths, mostly from secondary school drop-outs have exacerbated drug abuse. Famuyiwa, Aina and Bankole-Oti (2011) conducted a study on the use of psychoactive substances by adolescents in metropolitan Lagos, Nigeria. The authors observed that the rate of substance abuse among adolescents ranged between 4.0 and 4.8%.

Researchers have responded to this anomaly by exploring various ways of disseminating drug abuse information to youth. Among identified successful methods of disseminating information on drug abuse is social media. For instance, Scanfield, Scanfield, and Larson, (2010) used twitter to explore evidence of misunderstanding or misuse of antibiotics among adolescents. Lord, Brevard & Budman (2011) explored Facebook's potential to conduct a survey of motives and attitudes associated with patterns of nonmedical prescription opioid medication use and abuse among college students. Their result supported the potential of online social networks to serve as powerful vehicles to connect with college-aged populations about their drug use. Winzel (2002) carried out similar research and noted that the messages were very effective and the information

was liked and shared by students. Steiner (2009) posits that social media such as Face book, My Space, blogs, Twitter and Wikis can be used effectively in library reference work.

Botvin, Griffin, Diaz & Ifill-Williams (2001) carried out a school based drug abuse preventive intervention in New York City Schools, the authors discovered that students who received the intervention reported less smoking, drinking, drunkenness, inhalant and polydrug use relative to others, showing that drug abuse preventive programs are effective. Han-Zhu, Joseph, Huey & Yu-Hua. (2006) noted that in China social media was engaged to increase anti-drug education to the general population. The authors further noted that anti-drug education has been included in the curricula for primary and secondary school students and more pragmatic policies have been adopted to curb drug abuse challenges. To help curb drug abuse challenges, Osadebe & Dim (2009) posit that it is the responsibility of academic librarians to disseminate information on topical issues to students, (of which drug abuse is one) since most of their clients are students who need these life saving information most. The authors went on to say that the academic library's responsibility to students goes far beyond mere mechanical acquisition and provision of information on demand.

National Drug Control (2012) grouped preventive measures which can be used to curb drug abuse into two. They are:

- a. Family based prevention program which include - Developing strong and positive family bond between children and their families, parental monitoring of children's activities and peers; development of clear rule of conduct that are consistently reinforced within the family, involvement of parents in the lives of their children, providing guidelines to success in school performance, development of high self esteem, encouraging strong

bonds with institutions such as schools and religious organizations, discussion of assertiveness skills that can motivate people to resist engaging in drug abuse and adoption of conventional norms about drug abuse

- b. Community and school based prevention programs which include-programs that allow the students to be interactive and learn skills such as how to refuse drugs; programs that encourage a social community to abstain from drugs' using peer leaders to facilitate the interactions on drug abuse prevention, teaching youth and adolescents skills that increase resistance skills in social situations, life skill training which are necessary to resist social influences to substances use, including alcohol, cigarettes and other illicit drugs, talking with, listening to how to make good choices and good friends, learning different ways to say no to drug abuse, encouraging positive friendship and interests, teaching virtues of prevention of drug abuse.

Though the prospect of using social media to disseminate drug information is high, Jaeger & Bertot (2010) observe that there are many challenges hindering it. Among the problems that hinder use of social media in disseminating information on drug abuse are lack of access to internet connectivity in some areas, unstable Internet connectivity which is prevalent in developing countries and the fact that many of the target audience may not be registered members of the social media platform being used. Physical bandwidth in developing countries is low because it is prohibitively expensive. (Habler & Jackson, 2010) Ezeani (2009) identifies lack of constant power supply, phobia for technology, orchestrated by lack of skill and lack of enabling environment as some of the factors that hinder use of social networks in information dissemination among librarians. In a similar study, Ajayi & Nwachukwu (2012) identified lack of ICT infrastructure, management problems, inadequate security and financial problems.

Though efforts have been made by researchers to find out ways to disseminate drug abuse information, none of these efforts is centered on the role of the library in disseminating information on drug abuse through social media. It is this gap that this work sets out to bridge.

Objectives of the Study: The general objective of the study is to examine the use of social media in disseminating information on drug abuse to young adults. Specifically, the work:

- Ascertained the knowledge and awareness of librarians on the use of social media to prevent drug abuse.
- Ascertained the knowledge and awareness of librarians on preventive measures of drug abuse
- Determined frequency of use of social media in disseminating information on drug abuse prevention
- Determined types of social media through which information on drug abuse prevention were disseminated
- Determined challenges associated with disseminating information on prevention of drug abuse through social media.

Methodology

Design and Area of Study : The study design was a survey. The area of study is South-East geopolitical zone of Nigeria. This consists of Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo States. It has four Federal University Libraries.

Population for the Study: The population for the study comprised all the academic librarians working in the university libraries. They comprised academic librarians working in University of Nigeria, Nsukka UNN,40: Michael Okpara, University, Umudike, MOU,5: Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, NAU, 6 and Federal University of Technology Owerri, FUTO, 20. The total population was 71.

Sampling technique

There was no sampling because the population to be studied is small. 71 people altogether. Eboh (1998) suggest that in situations where the population is small, there is no need for sampling as all of them can be included in the study.

Instrument for Data Collection: A well structured questionnaire based on a four-point scale was validated by two experts in the Department of Library and Information Science. The questionnaire whose reliability was estimated using Cronbach Alpha formula and found to be 0.76 was used.

Method of Data Collection and Analysis: The researchers administered the instrument to respondents at UNN and NAU while two trained assistants administered and retrieved the instruments from respondents at MOU and FUTO. A total of 63 copies (88.73%) were returned. However, fifty-nine copies (93.65%) were properly filled and used for data analysis. The data were analyzed using percentages and mean scores. Fifty percent (50%) as well as mean scores of 2.5 and above were accepted.

Results

Knowledge and awareness of librarians on the use of social media to prevent drug abuse.

1. It was discovered from the study that 6.35% (4 of 63 respondents) were neither aware that information on prevention of drug abuse could be disseminated through social media nor could academic librarians concern themselves with disseminating information on prevention of drug abuse through social media. This finding is a surprise. Osadebe & Dim (2009) vehemently stated that it is the responsibility of academic librarians to disseminate information on topical issues to students, (of which drug abuse is one) since most of their clients are students who need these life saving information most. The authors went on to say that the academic library's responsibility to its users goes far beyond the mere mechanical acquisition and provision of information on demand.

2. It was found from the study that 4.76% (3 of 63 respondents) were aware that information on prevention of drug abuse could be disseminated through social media but were of the opinion that it should not be a duty of academic librarians

3. The study also found that 3.17% (2 of 63 respondents) were not aware that information on prevention of drug abuse could be disseminated through social media but they felt that it could be part of academic librarians' duty. This finding corroborates the findings of Ezeani (2010) which states that though some librarians are in face book and some other social networks, they have not been using these media optimally.

Table 1: Preventive Measures of Drug Abuse N=59

S/N	Preventive measure of drug abuse	Mean	Decision
1	Early Intervention	3.44	Upheld
2	Education at all levels	3.22	„
3	Increased publicity of adverse effects of drug abuse	3.47	„
4	Creative use of social media sources	3.10	„
5	Instruction on strong and positive family bonds	3.20	„
6	Parental monitoring of children's activities and peers	3.34	„
7	Instruction on clear rule of conduct that are consistently reinforces within the family	3.12	„
8	Instruction on the involvement of parents in the lives of their children	3.25	„
9	Providing guidelines to success in school performance	3.00	„
10	Laying emphasis on high self esteem	3.15	„
11	Encouraging strong bonds with institutions such as schools and religious organizations	3.07	„
12	Discussion of assertiveness skills that can motivate people to resist engaging in drug abuse	3.15	„
13	Discussion of virtues of abstaining from drug abuse	3.36	„
14	Discussion on improved social skills	3.05	„

Table 1 shows that the fourteen items were upheld and accepted by respondents. Acceptance mean scores ranged from 3.00-3.47. Increased publicity of adverse effects of drug abuse was the most accepted.

Table 2: Frequency of Use of Social Media to Disseminate Information on Prevention of Drug Abuse N= 59

S/N	Social Media	Mean	Decision
1	Wiki	2.54	
2	Linked in	2.34	
3	Teleconferencing	2.29	
4	Newsgroup	2.44	
5	Flicker	2.12	
6	Face book	3.15	Mst F U
7	Twitter	2.66	
8	You Tube	2.68	
9	Library Thing	2.54	
10	SMS	2.92	Mre F U
11	Chat	2.76	F U
12	My Space	2.44	

Key: Mst F U= Most Frequently Used; Mre F U = More Frequently Used;
F U= Frequently Used

Table 2 shows that seven items were frequently used. Their mean scores ranged from 2.54-3.15, while five items were not used frequently. Facebook was the most frequently used social medium.

Table 3 Types of Social Media Used to Disseminate Each Preventive Measure of Drug Abuse. N=29

S/n	Preventive measure of drug abuse	Types of Social Media	Freq.	%
1	Early Intervention	Face book, Linkedin	24	82.76
2	Education at all levels	Twitter, Chat, SMS, Face book, Library Thing, Teleconferencing, Linkedin, Wiki, Newsgroup, You tube	23	79.31
3	Increased publicity of adverse effects of drug abuse	Face book, E-mail, My Space, Chat, Linkedin, Twitter, SMS, You tube	22	75.86
4	Creative use of social media sources	Face book, You tube, Twitter, Chat, Linkedin, Blog and Wiki	21	72.41
5	Environmental prevention which focuses on changing community conditions or policies so that availability of substances is minimally reduced	Face book, Linkedin, NLA Online forum, Twitter, You tube, E-mail, News group, My space, Bado, Flicker, Chat and SMS	20	68.97
6	Environmental prevention which focuses on changing community conditions or policies so that demand of substances is drastically reduced	Face book, Twitter, You tube, Linkedin, Newsgroup, My space, Chat and SMS	20	68.97
7	Instruction on strong and positive family bonds	Face book, Chat, Library Thing, SMS, You Tube, My Space, Wiki and Twitter	20	68.97
8	Parental monitoring of children's activities and peers	Face book, Chat, Library Thing, SMS, Wiki and Twitter, You Tube,	16	55.17
9	Instruction on clear rule of conduct that are consistently reinforces within the family	You tube, Face book, Chat, Newsgroup, Library Thing, Twitter and SMS	18	62.02
10	Instruction on the involvement of parents in the lives of their children	Chat, Wiki, Library Thing, Face book, You tube and Wiki	17	58.62
11	Providing guidelines to success in school performance	Face book, Library Thing, Teleconferencing, Twitter, SMS and Chat	16	55.17
12	Laying emphasis on high self esteem	Face book, Chat, My Space, Library Thing, Twitter and You tube	18	62.06
13	Encouraging strong bonds with institutions such as schools and religious organizations	Face book, Linkedin, Twitter, Chat, You tube, Library Thing and SMS	18	62.06
14	Discussion of assertiveness skills that can motivate people to resist engaging in drug abuse	Library Thing, Wiki, You tube, SMS, Newsgroup, Face book, Chat, Linkedin and Teleconferencing	19	65.52
15	Discussion of virtues of abstaining from drug abuse	Chat, Face book, Linkedin, Library Thing, Wiki, Twitter, You tube and Newsgroup	20	68.97
16	Discussion on improves social skills	Chat, SMS, Flicker, Linkedin, Library Thing, Face book, Twitter and Newsgroup	19	65.52

Table 3 shows that sixteen items were disseminated through social media. Percentage of respondents that disseminated each preventive measure through social media ranged from 55.17-82.76.

Table 4 Challenges Associated with Disseminating Information on Preventive Measures of Drug Abuse through Social Media in University Libraries. N=59

S/N	Challenges	Mean	Decision
1	Internet access in university libraries fluctuates	3.51	A
2	Some members of the internet group are not connected to the Internet	3.37	A
3	Some members of the target group are not registered members of the social media platform being used for disseminating the information.	3.20	A
4	Some librarians lack skills in use of social media	3.17	A
5	The use of social media requires a large bandwidth which could need substantial Institutional resources	3.19	A
6	Numerous applications available through social media are potential sources of viruses. They can pose a serious threat to the safety of IT systems in these libraries	2.93	A
7	Constant power supply to sustain the program is lacking.	3.34	A
8	There is inadequate Information and Communications Technology (ICT) infrastructure to bolster up the Program	3.14	A

Key: A=Accepted

Table 4 shows that eight items were accepted as challenges confronting academic librarians in disseminating information on preventive measures of drug abuse through social media. These means ranged from 2.93-3.51.

Discussion of Findings

Findings of the study show that 6.35% (4 of 63 respondents) are neither aware that information on prevention of drug abuse could be disseminated through social media nor could academic librarians concern themselves with disseminating information on prevention of drug abuse through social media. The finding of this study also revealed that 4.76% (3 of 63 respondents) were aware that information on prevention of drug abuse could be disseminated through social media. This contradicts the suggestion of Osadebe & Dim (2009) which posits that it is the responsibility of academic librarians to disseminate information on topical issues to students, (of

which drug abuse is one) since majority of library clients are students who need these life saving information.

Findings from the study also show that Face book is the most frequently used social media in disseminating drug abuse information. The rating of Face book as most frequently used social medium is consistent with Lord, Brevard & Budman (2011) and Winzel (2012) studies which results supported the potential of Face book and Twitter social media respectively to serve as powerful vehicles in studies of drug use and abuse of college-aged populations. SMS and Chat were rated second and third most popular social media used in disseminating information about prevention of drug abuse by respondents.

The study disclosed that only 46.03% (29 of 63 respondents) made use of social media for disseminating information on each preventive measure of drug abuse. (see Table 3). The greatest percentage of respondents (82.76%) indicated early intervention as the greatest preventive measure of drug abuse which could be disseminated through Face book, Linked in, Twitter, Chat and SMS. This is in consonance with massive engagement of social media to increase anti-drug education to the general population in China. (Han-Zhu, Joseph, , Huey, & Yu-Hua, 2006).

The study also shows that first and second greatest challenges confronting dissemination of information on prevention of drug abuse through social media are fluctuation of Internet access in university libraries and the fact that some members of the target group are not connected to the Internet. In developing countries the first challenge is not unexpected. The second one agrees with observation of Jaeger and Bertot (2010) on ensuring equal and sustained public access to government information.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it can be concluded that Face book, was the most frequently used social medium to disseminate information about prevention of drug abuse. Increased publicity of adverse effects of drug abuse was the highest rated preventive measure by these academic librarians. All the identified challenges to dissemination of information on prevention of drug abuse through social media were perceived as serious by librarians. The major hindrances confronting dissemination of information on prevention of drug abuse through social media were Internet access fluctuation, the fact that some members of the target group were not connected to the Internet and constant power outage (failure).

Recommendations

1. Each University Library Administration should provide in-service training on use of social media to her academic librarians to enable the latter appreciate effective discharge of core library services through social media.
2. The government should effect reduction on cost of ICT materials such as computers and moderns so that many citizens can have access to Internet facilities.
3. The government should increase the bandwidth allocated to universities at minimum cost so that online information could be accessed seamlessly and fast.
4. The government should improve power supply within the country.
5. University authorities should augment government power supplies to their universities with powerful generators.

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