

# Usage of library and the social media by the new entrants in 2015: a provincial analysis based on Arts, Management and Law streams at University of Peradeniya

**Pradeepa Wijetunge**

*Librarian*

*University of Colombo, Sri Lanka*

*librarian@cmb.lib.ac.lk*

**Champa N. K. Alahakoon**

*Senior Assistant Librarian*

*University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka*

*kumaria@pdn.ac.lk*

## **Abstract**

*The paper discusses the use of a school library by new entrants to the University of Peradeniya in 2015. Arts (BA), Management (BBA) and Law (LLB) streams were taken for consideration. Survey research method was applied using a structured questionnaire. Objectives are to identify their school library usage, the use of social media and the use of other digital messaging systems by province. Two day library registration of new entrants' (877) were analysed by using SPSS version 13. Regarding the subject teachers' influence on the use of the library, majority of students were asked by the teacher to use the library in BA, BBA, and LLB. In the use of social media, most of them were not using face book to get information. Twitter indicated a very low usage in the overall three streams. Regarding Skype, again a very low usage has been indicated. Average expressed their desire to communicate with these media with the library. Below fifty percents of new entrants had email accounts. Average number of students (34.4%) had mobile phone with Internet connection and this is a little higher (27.1%) than the use of social media. More than fifty percent like to get library messages to their mobile phones. According to the overall results, students from the all streams not considerably used the library in all provinces and although, they like to have the library messages to their mobile phones, they are not familiar with the social media and with other communication technology. Therefore, training programmes and other library awareness methods relating to the use of all kind of resources and communication methods are necessary for them to increase the library usage in all provinces.*

**Keywords:** *Undergraduate, Library Usage, Social Media, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka*

## 1.0 Introduction

The daily use of information materials in a library does not mean the use of books and periodicals only as in traditional services but it involves the use of modern technology such as the services through Information communication technology and also other social media. The Oxford English Dictionary Online, (2010) defines social networking as the use or establishment of a social network or connections, and the use of web sites which enable users to interact with one another to find and contact people with common interests. According to Baro, Edewor, and Sunday, (2013) Face book (FB), MySpace, Twitter and del.icio.us are just a few of the social networking options available on the Internet today. Smartphone, iPads and other technology devices permit a constant flow of bi-directional communication and information at home, colleagues, friends throughout the time (Cox and McLeod, 2014). But without getting the proper instruction from a university library, the experience they gain from the school library usage is not adequate to use the university libraries.

In 2014 Kumara carried out a survey with the freshman students of the University of Moratuwa and it indicated that use of Internet, including web searches, Wikis, Blogs, Video websites, Social Networking, and Email usage is high in the University of Moratuwa while Mashroofa, (2011) indicated that the students need further help to use modern communication methods. The goal of this study was to identify the use of the library by the new entrants to the University of Peradeniya and how experienced they were in the use of social media and communication to exchange the ideas and information by province and which helps to the university library to reap its benefit when providing information resources.

## 2.0 Literature Review

It is believed that improving users' knowledge of libraries' collections and services could be a motivating factor for more usage of the library for new entrants. Instruction in library use, guidance from the senior professionals, education and exploration provided by libraries to users to enable them to make more effective, efficient, and independent use of information sources and services to which these libraries provide access (Aderibigbe and Ajiboye, 2013).

In addition to these traditional modes of accessing information, the rise of social media tools have also provided the opportunity to share the positive and negative thoughts as well as information they want. Even in Sri Lanka the increased development of library collections has resulted in many university libraries to offer their library services to the user community. Gu and Widen-Wulff, (2011) found that researchers have a variety of information practices, and suggested that librarians need to incorporate social media in ways to further scholarly communication. McDonnell and Shiri, (2011) found that the integration of social media search applications in transferring information in the

digital library made users feel more comfortable when using the libraries. Adah, (2012) mentioned that social media is necessary; to build awareness and promote the library and programmes and services, to share accurate information, and to improve library services based on customer feedback. In 2011 Head and Eisenberg carried out a survey with University of Washington's information school and found that most of them (40%) used smart phones, and 13% had FB, 11% had email accounts. Moreover 65% stated that they had some experience using social media sites such as FB, Twitter or Youtube. Collings and Quan-Haase, (2012) mentioned that although they have expected the FB to be the most frequently used platform, the findings showed that Twitter was the most popular, followed by FB. Sponcil and Gitimu, (2013) indicated that FB and e-mail were the social network websites of choice, with 99% of college students using FB and 90% using e-mail in a mid western University in US.

Particular attention need to be paid to the ability of university libraries to market their services, remain relevant to younger patrons and achieve a new level of interaction between library personnel and either current or prospective patrons. University libraries contain a lot of information but not all of them may appeal to all users. If the users are willing to have information through social media, they would be able to achieve better search results.

### **3.0 Objectives of the Study**

The primary aim of this study is to examine the school library usage by the new entrants of 2015 to at the University of Peradeniya considering the provinces in Sri Lanka. Therefore, the following objectives were formulated;

1. To analyse the provincial participation of arts (BA), Management (BBA) and Law (LLB) subject streams of the survey,
2. To analyse their school library usage by province,
3. To find out their usage of social media by province,
4. To determine the use of other messaging systems by province (email, smart phones, receipt of messages and willingness to communicate)

### **4.0 Research Methodology**

Survey research strategy was applied for the study and a structured questionnaire was used as the data collecting tool. This questionnaire was administered when the new entrants get the registration from the Main library, University of Peradeniya. Out of the total registration days of new entrants, the study was analysed using only two days library registration data of new entrants. There were 877 new entrants during the two days. Out of the total it indicates 73% of sample size. Data was analysed by using the Statistical package for Social Sciences version 13 and descriptive statistics are discussed.

## 5.0 Findings

### 5.1 Students' provincial representation in the study

The following Table (Table 1) indicates the number of students who registered at the library within the two days of data collection and the province of the three streams such as Arts (BA). Management (BBA), and Law (LLB). The population was 877 students.

**Table- 1: Provincial representation of the three streams**

Degree	West	Cent	North	South	Sabara.	Uva	No Cen	No Wes	East	Total
<b>BA</b>	71	117	58	101	99	53	77	101	35	712
	8%	13.3%	6.6%	11.4%	11.2%	6%	8.7%	11.4%	4%	80.6%
<b>BBA</b>	36	53	-	9	7	8	1	11	2	127
	4.1%	6%	-	1%	.8%	.9%	.1%	1.2%	.2%	14.4%
<b>LLB</b>	9	6	3	2	4	5	2	6	1	38
	1%	.7%	.3%	.2%	.5%	.6%	.2%	.7%	.1%	4.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>877</b>

The provincial analysis indicate that from 80.6% of BA students highest have come from Central (CE), followed by Southern (SO) and North Western (NW) provinces, but in the case of BBA students, from 14.4%, most have come from Western (WE), CE and NW provinces and no one from Northern (NO) province. From the LLB students, out of 4.3%, highest were from WE, CE and NW provinces. It is clearly indicated that NW is the 3<sup>rd</sup> highest in all streams.

### 5.2 Library usage of new entrants by in province

The question was posed about the subject teachers' influence to use the library. It is remarkable that 98.6% (712) BA students were asked by the teacher to read books related to their subjects other than the notes given in their classes. According to the provincial percentage the range is indicated as 94.9% - 100% in all provinces. From the BBA, overall 99.2% of students indicated that they used library which also range from 97.2% - 100% in all provinces except NO province. In the stream of LLB overall 94.7% indicated that the teachers asked to use the library and NO province indicated the lowest 66.7% while all other provinces indicated 100%. Table 2 indicated the provincial percentage of library use.

**Table- 2: Provincial percentage of library use**

Degree	West	Cent	North	South	Sabar	Uva	N. Cen	N.Wes	East	Res. Total	Total
<b>BA</b>	71	111	58	100	98	52	77	100	35	702	712
	<b>100</b>	<b>94.9</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>98.1</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>98.6</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>BBA</b>	35	53	-	9	7	8	1	11	2	126	127
	<b>97.2</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>99.2</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>LLB</b>	9	5	2	2	4	5	2	6	1	36	38
	<b>100</b>	<b>83.3</b>	<b>66.7</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>94.7</b>	<b>100%</b>

Frequency of using the library was measured by giving 5 options and provincial results indicated that most of the BA students (42.1%) use the library a few days a week, especially those who came from NW, Sabaragamuwa (SAB) and SO provinces. The results are indicated in Table 3 below.

**Table- 3: Provincial analysis of Frequency of BA students' library usage**

Degree	West	Cent	North	South	Sabar	Uva	N.Cen	N.Wes	East	Total
<b>Daily</b>	0	3	6	2	3	3	2	4	3	26
<b>%</b>	<b>.0</b>	<b>.4</b>	<b>.8</b>	<b>.3</b>	<b>.4</b>	<b>.4</b>	<b>.3</b>	<b>.6</b>	<b>.4</b>	<b>3.7</b>
<b>Few days a week</b>	26	35	36	38	41	27	29	53	15	300
<b>%</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>4.9</b>	<b>5.1</b>	<b>5.3</b>	<b>5.8</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>7.4</b>	<b>2.1</b>	<b>42.1</b>
<b>Once a week</b>	21	39	10	32	28	17	17	23	12	199
<b>%</b>	<b>2.9</b>	<b>5.5</b>	<b>1.4</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>2.4</b>	<b>2.4</b>	<b>3.2</b>	<b>1.7</b>	<b>27.9</b>
<b>Once in two weeks</b>	7	11	0	9	12	1	7	9	2	58
<b>%</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1.5</b>	<b>.0</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>1.7</b>	<b>.1</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>.3</b>	<b>8.1</b>
<b>Once a month</b>	0	8	2	5	5	4	3	4	0	31
<b>%</b>	<b>.0</b>	<b>1.1</b>	<b>.3</b>	<b>.7</b>	<b>.7</b>	<b>.6</b>	<b>.4</b>	<b>.6</b>	<b>.0</b>	<b>4.4</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>614</b>

Table 4 below indicates the frequency of BBA students' library usage. Accordingly, the highest number of new entrants (40.9%) uses the library once a week except those from the Northern Province. Some of them have used the library a few days a week (18.1%) and once in two weeks (18.1%) too.

**Table- 4: Provincial analysis of frequency of BBA students' library usage**

Degree	West	Cent	North	South	Sabar	Uva	N.Cen	N.Wes	East	Total
Daily	0	2	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
%	.0	1.6	-	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	1.6
Few days a week	5	7	-	0	2	4	1	3	1	23
%	3.9	5.5	-	.0	1.6	3.1	.8	2.4	.8	18.1
Once a week	20	16	-	5	4	2	0	5	0	52
%	15.7	12.6	-	3.9	3.1	1.6	.0	3.9	.0	40.9
Once in two weeks	5	11	-	2	1	2	0	1	1	23
%	3.9	8.7	-	1.6	.8	1.6	.0	.8	.8	18.1
Once a month	2	4	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	6
%	1.6	3.1	-	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	4.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>40</b>		<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>106</b>

According to Table 5 below, most number of LLB students from NW, WE, and Uva provinces indicated that they used the library once a week. Some of the provinces do not indicate multiple options, yet the students use it once a week especially in the Southern province. It is highlighted that not a single LLB student uses the library daily.

**Table- 5: Provincial analysis of frequency of LLB students' library usage**

Degree	West	Cent	North	South	Sabar	Uva	N. Cen	N. Wes	East	Total
Daily	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
%	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0
Few days a week	3	3	1	0	3	0	2	1	1	14
%	7.9	7.9	2.6	.0	7.9	.0	5.3	2.6	2.6	36.8
Once a week	3	2	1	2	0	3	0	4	0	15
%	7.9	5.3	2.6	5.3	.0	7.9	.0	10.5	.0	39.5
Once in two weeks	3	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	7
%	7.9	2.6	.0	.0	2.6	2.6	.0	2.6	.0	18.4
Once a month	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
%	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	2.6	.0	.0	.0	2.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>37</b>

### 5.3 Usage of social media by the new entrants

The use of social media of these new entrants was investigated. Questions were posed with three popular social media (Face book, Twitter, and Skype) and inquired whether they have accounts of these social media. Following Table 6 indicates the use of social media by province.

**Table- 6: Provincial analysis of use of social media by new entrants**

<b>Social Media</b>	<b>West</b>	<b>Cent</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>South</b>	<b>Sabara</b>	<b>Uva</b>	<b>N Cen</b>	<b>No Wes</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Face Book</b>	33	66	20	29	26	12	14	28	11	239
<b>%</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>7.5</b>	<b>2.3</b>	<b>3.3</b>	<b>2.9</b>	<b>1.4</b>	<b>1.6</b>	<b>3.2</b>	<b>1.2</b>	<b>27.1</b>
<b>Twitter</b>	7	11	4	3	3	4	1	3	6	42
<b>%</b>	<b>.8</b>	<b>1.2</b>	<b>.5</b>	<b>.3</b>	<b>.3</b>	<b>.5</b>	<b>.1</b>	<b>.3</b>	<b>.7</b>	<b>4.8</b>
<b>Skype</b>	16	34	10	13	8	4	10	18	8	121
<b>%</b>	<b>1.8</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>1.1</b>	<b>1.5</b>	<b>.9</b>	<b>.5</b>	<b>1.1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>.9</b>	<b>13.7</b>

Use of Face Book indicates that CE (7.5%) and WE (3.7%) have high usage, while Twitter indicates a very low usage in all three streams amounting to 42 (4.8%). In relation to Skype, CE province indicated the highest usage which amounted to (3.9%). According to the overall analysis, there is no remarkable usage of social media and only 27.1% use FB.

In addition to that, the questions were posed relating to the use of email account, smart phones, whether they like to communicate using these media and would they like to have library messages to their mobile phones. Accordingly, the Table 7 indicated the responses for each facility.

**Table- 7: Provincial analysis of use of other facilities by new entrants**

Other accounts	West	Cent	North	South	Sabara	Uva	No Cen	No Wes	East	Total
Use of email Acc.	44	68	24	31	33	18	17	33	17	285
%	5	7.7	2.7	3.5	3.7	2.0	1.9	3.7	1.9	32.3
Like to communicate	55	86	30	44	42	28	23	48	21	377
%	6.2	9.7	3.4	5	4.8	3.2	2.6	5.4	2.4	42.7
Use of Mobile phone	50	70	26	30	33	19	17	42	17	304
%	5.7	7.9	2.9	3.4	3.7	2.2	1.9	4.8	1.9	34.4
Receive messages	68	98	46	48	50	36	24	57	26	453
%	7.7	11.1	5.2	5.4	5.7	4.1	2.7	6.5	2.9	51.3

Relating to having email accounts, CE province indicated the highest (7.7%) and WE (5%) and NW (3.7%). The next question asked was whether they like to communicate with the library through any of these accounts. The results indicated that a positive response was obtained from CE province (9.7%), WE (6.2%) and NW (5.4%). About the mobile phone with an Internet connection again CE indicated the highest with 7.9%, followed by WE with 5.7% and NW provinces got the third highest with 4.8%. Next it was asked whether they would like to get library messages (SMS) to their mobile phone. This is the highest percentage obtained, and it showed a positive response of 453 (51.3%) out of the total sample in three subject streams. It is clear that majority of students like to get messages from the library in a medium which is the very familiar to them. Highest indicated was from CE (11.1%), WE (7.7%) and NW (6.5%) provinces. This analysis clearly indicated that all these facilities were highly used by CE, WE and NW provinces in the country.

On the other hand, it was seen that the social media and other accounts were made use of by less than half the population except using messages to the phone (51.3%). Therefore this is the popular, accessible, and useable media of these new entrants in the university. These results further indicated that these new entrants are not familiar with the social networks in the country. Although highlighted provinces got the highest, the percentages do not show a significant level of usage.

The following figure clearly indicates the differences between use and not use of these facilities by the new entrance.

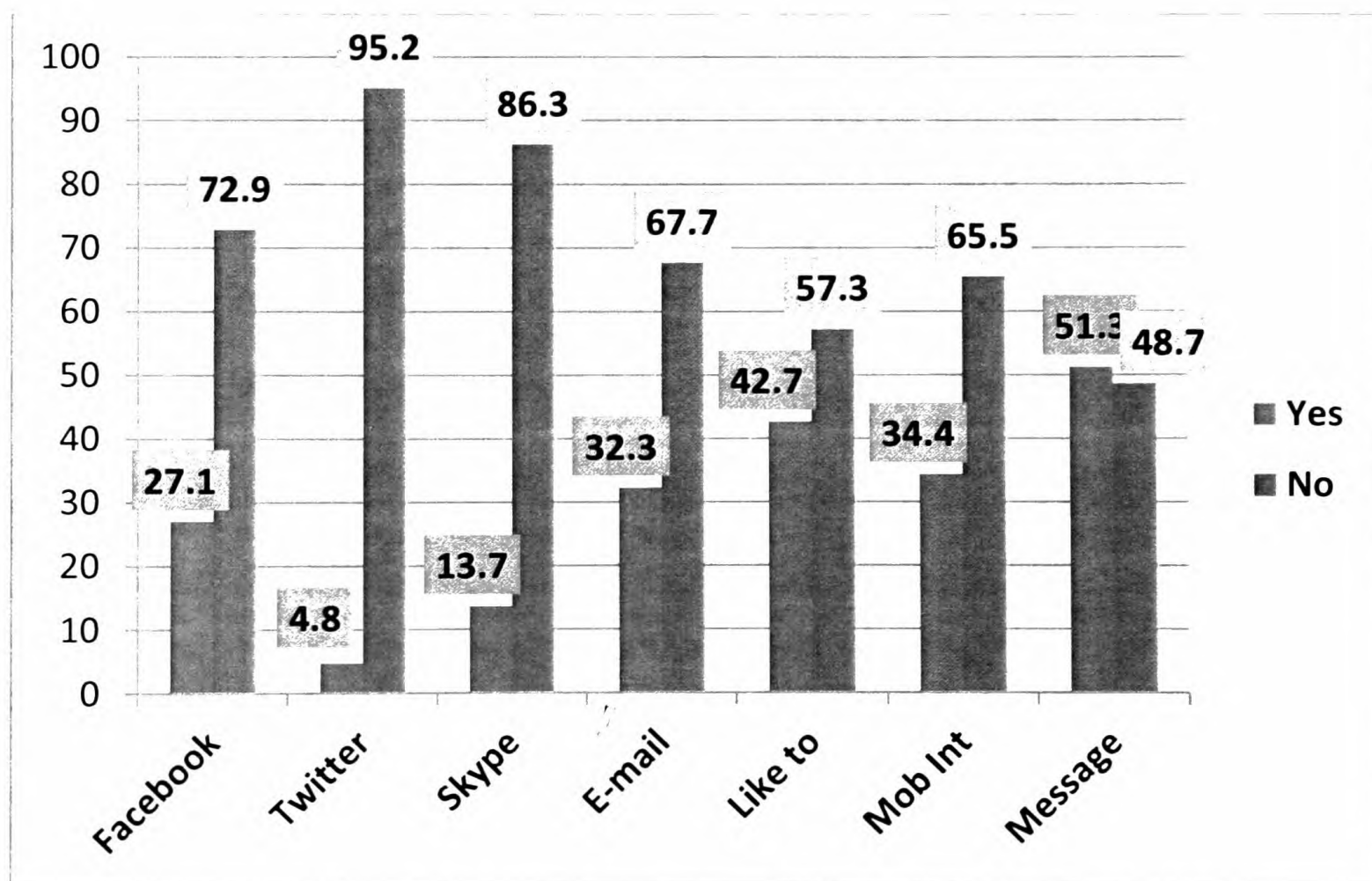


Figure- 1: Usage level of social media

## 6.0 Discussion and Conclusion

Although majority of BA students came from CE, and WE provinces only one third of them use the library either few days a week or once a week. Relating to NW province, three-fourth of students use the library few days a week. In the BBA stream although CE has the highest usage, only one-third of them use the library but the WE and NW provinces indicate that second and third highest usage by them. From the LLB students, half of them from WE and CE use the library a few days a week and this is higher amount compared with BA and BBA stream.

About the use of social media, Skype is used by one-third of CE province students and WE province indicated that only one-fourth of them used FB. Other provinces indicate a very low usage of this media. Considering the three media; FB, Skype, and Twitter three-fourth of CE province students used either one of these media for communication.

Relating to the question of other facilities such as email, and their desire to communicate, and have messages from the library, half of them in all provinces like to communicate using whatever of these media with the library. At the same time, three-fourth of them would like only to receive messages from the library. Although Collins and Quan-Haase (2012) mentioned that Twitter was the most popular, in the University of Peradeniya they are not much aware of the accounts of FB, Twitter and Skype but most of them have email account, proving the results of Head and Eisenberg, (2011) and Sponcil and Gitimu, (2013) US. According to this study, still the highly used media among the new entrants is mobile phone messaging.

The results of this study indicated that, it is further alarming that new entrants to BA, BBA, and LLB courses still do not have enough knowledge or skills to use a library and social media almost in all provinces. This study identifies the different usage patterns of new entrants and this information will be helpful to the university library when handling students from different provinces to make use of modern resources available in the library. Further this is a very good platform to the librarians to design course content to provide training especially regarding the open source information, the digitized collections, and the accessibility of the e-collections in the library based on their ability. The planning of training programmes for different levels, the directions of the training programmes, the engagement with users to promote the library services, and if the modern changes are challenges to them how the users to be trained either at provincial level or based on their ability level of grasping of the content of the training, are the aspects that the librarians should consider when designing the training programmes.

## References

ADAH, J. U. (2012). **Application of social media in libraries, including m-technologies and m-learning.** Paper presented in The Librarians' Registration Council of Nigeria (LRCN) in Collaboration with US Mission on a National Workshop on e-library for Librarians, Kogi State Polytechnic, Lokoja, Kogi State, 17-19 April.

ADERIBIGBE, Nurudeen Adeniyi and Ajiboye, Adebimpe. (2013). **User education program as determinant of electronic information resources usage in Nimbe Adedipe University Library, Nigeria.** *The Electronic Library*, Vol. 31 No (2), 244-255.

COLLINS, Gary, and Quan-Haase, Anabel. (2012). Social Media and academic libraries: current trends and future challenges. ASIST, Conference. Available at <https://www.asis.org/asist2012/proceedings/Submissions/272.pdf>  
Accessed on 13.08.2015

COX, Daniel D. and McLeod, Scott. (2014). **Social media marketing and communications strategies for school superintendents.** *Journal of Educational Administration*, Vol.52 No (6), 850-868.

GU, F. and Widen-Wulff, G. (2011). **Scholarly communication and possible changes in the context of social media: a Finnish case study.** *Electronic Library*, Vol. 29 No (6), 762-776.

HEAD, Alison J. and Eisenberg, Michael B. (2011). **How college students manage technology while in the library during crunch time.** *Project Information Literacy Research Report: 'Balancing Act'*. The Information School, University of Washington.

KUMARA, A. D. B. (2014). **Use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) by university freshmen: with special reference to the University of Moratuwa**, *Journal of University Librarians Association of Sri Lanka*, 18 (2), 26-40.

MASHROOFA, M. M. (2012). **Requirement of Net Generation towards university libraries in Sri Lanka**, *Journal of University Librarians Association of Sri Lanka*, 16 (2), 101-116.

MCDONNELL, M. and Shiri, A. (2011). **Social search: a taxonomy of, and user centered approach to, social web search**. *Program: Electronic Library and Information Series*. Vol. 45 No (1), 6-28.

Oxford English Dictionary Online (2010), "Social networking" available at: [www.dictionary.oed.com](http://www.dictionary.oed.com) (accessed June 2015).

SPONCIL, Megan. and Gitimu, Priscilla. (2013). **Use of social media by college students: relationship to communicate and self concept**. *Journal of Technology Research*, Vol. 4, p1-13.