

Use of Online Social Networking Services in University Libraries: A Study of University Libraries of Karnataka, India

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ABSTRACT

Social networking services have become a very powerful tool to provide library services. Over a period of time libraries are using online social networking services to make their services popular and user friendly. Social networking services like facebook, youtube, twitter, linkedin, google+, instagram have many applications that could be utilised by the libraries to provide number of services in libraries. The paper reports the use of social networking services in University libraries, based on a study of 54 university websites in Karnataka state. Method of content analysis has been adopted to study the websites. The results indicate that 53 of 54 universities (98.14%) do have their own websites in different domains. 29.62% State/Central universities are connected to Facebook. 18.51% are connected to Youtube. Very few are connected to Twitter and LinkedIn. 18.51% of Universities are connected to different networking sites. It is observed that the universities libraries in the state are catching up with these technologies but many of these services are used for mere elementary purposes. The study concludes that it is time for the university libraries to exploit the services and use the optimum potentialities of these Social networking services.

Keywords: Social networking services, university libraries, Karnataka, India

1. INTRODUCTION

Social networking service has emerged as a powerful form for providing library services. Because of the very nature of online social networking services, academic libraries can adopt these tools in many ways to provide innovative services. Social networking services like facebook, youtube, twitter, linkedin, google+, instagram have many applications that could be utilised by the libraries to provide number of services¹. These may be used to reach a new audience of potential users and provide quick updates to users and build discussion groups and collaborative work. These may also be used to market specific programs, products and services, push library news and press release, modernise the library image and reputation. These can be used for outreach activities through onward sharing, well beyond the institution itself, helping build connections and reputation more broadly.

Uses of social networking services include developing library resources, connecting staff with users, searching library catalogues and other online resources, providing user education, creating awareness of library resources, connecting with other librarians and library staff, getting feedback on library and its' services, etc. Online social networking service enables the academic library to pursue its mission and goals online, while promoting library resources and services.

Many studies have been reported on the use of online social networking services in the academic libraries

environment. Clyde² reported that during 1990's public and academic libraries used blogs and during 2000's the situation varies as significant difference is observed from country to country. O'Reilly³ observed that social media is a continually updated service, that gets better as many people use it. Dinesh & Nikam⁴ have observed that social networks are used to promote library services to match with user's opportunities. Malhan & Shivarama⁵ suggest the libraries to identify a role in the larger awareness of sharing best practices in any given area. The review of related literature finds that few libraries are using social networking tools to develop communities and personalise interactions between the library and users^{6,7}. Tools such as Facebook and Twitter were used to build relationships and rapport with client groups^{8,9}.

Study of 20 academic libraries revealed that users appear to reject connecting with libraries on Facebook, even though other libraries are potentially using Facebook to forge good relationships with users¹⁰. Loudon and Hall¹¹ found that some LIS staff find it difficult to integrate Twitter into library work. Barriers relating to privacy and IT issues were also identified in the library sector literature. A study on the use of Facebook in libraries identified issues with users who were not wishing to be friends of libraries on Facebook in their social spaces¹².

Hence the present study has been undertaken to identify the usage of social networking services in the University libraries of Karnataka.

2. METHODOLOGY

Social networking sites have real potential use for delivering library services. In this regard, in this paper it is examined how these social networking services have been used by university libraries of Karnataka State. Karnataka has 54 universities including 1 Central university, 26 State Universities, 12 Private and 15 Deemed universities. The webpages of individual universities and libraries have been visited to assess to what extent the social networking services are used by university libraries. The data has been tabulated, for analysis.

3. DATA INTERPRETATION

3.1. Library Website

It was found that 53 of 54 universities (98.14%) do have their own websites in different domains like ac.in,

.net, .org, .edu.in whereas 1 university does not have its own website. 5 State/Central universities (18.51%) were found to have separate web pages for their libraries, whereas 19 State/Central universities (70.37%) have libraries web pages as part of university websites. 2 university libraries web pages are under construction. Out of 12 Private universities 4 (33.33%) universities have separate websites for their libraries while the remaining two-third Private universities libraries (N=8) web-pages are part of the university websites. Of the 15 Deemed universities only 3 university libraries (20%) have separate web sites while 12 deemed universities (75%) have their libraries web pages as part of university websites. In all 12 of 54 universities (22.22%) have separate websites with a majority (68.51%, N=37) forming part of universities websites as show in Table 1.

Table 1. Usage of social networking services

S. No.	University name	Library website	Facebook	Youtube	Linkedin	Twitter	Any other
1.	Central University of Karnataka, Kalaburagi	Linked to University site	-	-	-	-	-
2.	Gulbarga University, Kalaburagi	Separate	Only mentioned. No further link provided	-	Only mentioned. No further link provided	Only mentioned. No further link provided	Google + -Only mentioned. No further link provided
3.	Karnataka State Women's University, Vijayapura	Linked to university site	-	-	-	-	-
4.	Bangalore University, Bengaluru	Linked to university site	Review: 3.8 star; postings, photos, videos uploaded	1 Video uploaded	-	University activities, photos, announcements, notifications	BU News -Linked to university web-page wherein library services like web-OPAC, ETD repositories, can be accessed
5.	University of Mysore, Mysuru	Linked to university site	Review: 5 star; posts, centenary celebrations photos, videos linked	-	-	Tweets, 9 following, 196 followers	-
6.	Karnatak University, Dharwad	Separate	-	-	-	-	-
7.	Kuvempu University, Shimoga	Linked to university site	-	-	-	-	-
8.	Mangalore University, Mangalore	Linked to university site	Announcements, notifications, photos, posts uploaded. Connected to university site wherein library services Web OPAC, E-Resource, campus access, remote access, facility and services are linked	Videos uploaded	-	No links founded	-

S. No.	University name	Library website	Facebook	Youtube	Linkedin	Twitter	Any other
9.	Davangere University, Davangere	Linked to university site	No further link available	-	-	No further link available	-
10.	Tumkur University, Tumkur	Linked to university site	Photos, visitors post, likes, videos uploaded. No link to library	Special lectures uploaded	67+ followers	91 tweets, 223 followers, 1 following	-
11.	Kannada University, Hampi	Library details not available	-	-	-	-	-
12.	Visvesvaraya Technological University, Belgavi	Separate	Review: 4 Star; Videos, photos, postings, linked to library e-resources can be accessed.	-	-	898 tweets, 1288 followers, 14 likes, official tweets available	Flickr – Photos uploaded Google+ - Photos uploaded
13.	National Law School of India University, Belgavi	Linked to university site	-	-	-	-	-
14.	Karnataka Veterinary, Animal, Fisheries Sciences University, Bidar	Library details not available	-	-	-	-	-
15.	Karnataka State Law University, Hubballi	Separate	-	-	-	-	-
16.	Karnataka Folklore (Janapada) University, Haveri	Library details not available	-	-	-	-	-
17.	Karnataka Samskrit University, Bengaluru	Page under construction	Review: 4.1; photos, postings, videos, events details uploaded, university website is linked	Videos Up-loaded	-	50 tweets, 73 following, 185 followers, 12 likes Notifications, circulars, posts uploaded	Google+ - photos uploaded
18.	Rani Channamma University, Belagavi	Linked to University site	-	-	-	-	-
19.	Karnataka State Open University, Mysuru	Linked to University site	-	-	-	-	-
20.	Karnataka State Women's University, Vijayapura	Linked to university site	-	-	-	-	-
21.	Vijayanagar Sri Krishnadevaraya University, Ballari	Library details not available	-	-	-	-	-
22.	University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad	Linked to university site	Notifications, posts, photos, videos are uploaded. No link to library	No videos uploaded	-	Recruitment, conference tweets, photos, videos uploaded	Google + - photos uploaded
23.	University of Agricultural Sciences, Bengaluru	Linked to university site	1 photo, 1 posting uploaded	-	-	4 following, 31 followers	-
24.	Rajiv Gandhi University of Health Sciences, Bengaluru	Separate	-	-	-	-	-

S. No.	University name	Library website	Facebook	Youtube	Linkedin	Twitter	Any other
25.	University of Agricultural Sciences, Raichur	Library page under construction	-	-	-	-	-
26.	University of Horticultural Sciences, Bagalkot	Linked to university site	-	-	-	-	-
27.	University of Agricultural and Horticultural Sciences, Shivamogga	No web-page of university					
Private University							
28.	Alliance University, Bengaluru	Linked to university site	Review: 4.3 star; photos, postings, videos, events uploaded	Videos uploaded	3758 followers, details of university uploaded	282 tweets, 233 following, 2745 followers, 8 likes, 5 lists	Flickr- photos uploaded
29.	Azim Premji University, Bengaluru	No library details	Review: 4.5 Star; photos, postings, events, videos, likes uploaded; Pinterest- which provides informative pics, videos, pins, etc., Linked to University website but no details found	Videos uploaded	14471 followers; event photos and videos uploaded	614 tweets, 139 following, 1376 followers, 4 likes	-
30.	CMR University, Bengaluru	No details of library	Review: 4.1 star; photos, posts, notifications, videos uploaded	Videos uploaded	-	89 tweets, 14 following, 155 followers, 17 likes; Videos, photos, posts, notifications, event pics uploaded	-
31.	PES University, Bengaluru	Separate	Postings, photos, videos uploaded; Linked to university website. Library services can be accessed through fb like- OPAC, Knimbus search	Videos uploaded	-	111 tweets, 3 following, 503 followers, 1 like, posts, photos uploaded	Google+ -postings, 119 followers; Pinterest, Instagram – 25 posts, 1640 followers, 1- following, photos uploaded
32.	Reva Institute of Technology and Management, Bengaluru	Separate	Photos, postings, notifications, linked to university and library. Services like OPAC, e-resources are accessible	Videos uploaded	Details of Reva University, 199 followers	36 tweets, 3 following, 99 followers, Photos, posts uploaded	Google+ - 52 followers, photos, postings uploaded
33.	Presidency University, Bengaluru	Linked to university website	Linked but no details provided	-	Linked but no details provided	Linked but no details provided	Goole +; Pinterest; tumblr; gmail; e-mail app - Linked but no details provided
34.	M.S. Ramaiah University of Applied Science, Bengaluru	No details of library found	Review: 4.4 Star; 73 photos, postings, videos, likes, events uploaded	Videos uploaded	-	23 tweets, 34 following, 41 followers, postings uploaded	-

S. No.	University name	Library website	Facebook	Youtube	Linkedin	Twitter	Any other
35.	Rai Technology University, Bengaluru		-	Videos Up-loaded	Profile-Connections, postings uploaded	71 tweets, 7 following, 132 followers, photos uploaded	Google + - Photos uploaded
Deemed Universities							
36.	Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru	No details of library found	-	36	Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru	No details of library found	-
37.	Manipal University, Manipal	Separate	-	37	Manipal University, Manipal	Separate	-
38.	K.L.E. Academy of Higher Education and Research, Belgavi	Page under construction	-	38	KLE Academy of Higher Education and Research, Belgavi	Page Under construction	-
39.	Christ University, Bengaluru	Separate	Review: 4.8 star; Photos, posts, notifications, event pics, university concerned news uploaded. Connects to the University website and links to Library from where different services can be accessed like Open Access material, repository, research/ reference manager, online library, institutional membership, library user manual, library links, library catalogue	39	Christ University, Bengaluru	Separate	Review: 4.8 star; Photos, posts, notifications, event pics, university concerned news uploaded. Connects to the university website and links to library from where different services can be accessed like open access material, repository, research/ reference manager, online library, institutional membership, library user manual, library links, library catalogue
40.	J.S.S. University, Mysuru	No details of library	-	40	JSS University, Mysuru	No details of library	-
41.	NIMHANS, Bengaluru	Linked to university website	-	41	NIMHANS, Bengaluru	Linked to University website	-
42.	NITTE University, Mangalore	No details of library	Photos, posts, activities of university uploaded. University website can be connected but no details of library available	42	NITTE University, Mangalore	No details of library	Photos, posts, activities of university uploaded. University website can be connected but no details of library available
43.	Sri Siddhartha Academy of Higher Education, Tumkur	No details of library	-	43	Sri Siddhartha Academy of Higher Education, Tumkur	No details of library	-
44.	Sri Devaraj Urs Academy of Higher Education and Research, Kolar	Linked to university website	-	44	Sri Devaraj Urs Academy of Higher Education and Research, Kolar	Linked to university website	-
45.	BLDE University, Vijayapura	Separate	-	45	BLDE University, Vijayapura	Separate	-

S. No.	University name	Library website	Facebook	Youtube	Linkedin	Twitter	Any other
46.	Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research, Bengaluru	Separate	-	46	Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research, Bengaluru	Separate	-
47.	Jain University, Bengaluru	Website under construction	Review: 4.4 star; Photos, posts, latest news, events, videos uploaded. Not linked to university website	47	Jain University, Bengaluru	Website under construction	Review: 4.4 star; Photos, posts, latest news, events, videos uploaded. Not linked to university website
48.	Yenepoya University, Mangalore	Linked to university website	-	48	Yenepoya University, Mangalore	Linked to University Website	-
49.	International Institute of Information Technology, Bengaluru	No details of library	Review: 4.8 star; Posts, videos, photos, notices uploaded. Connected to university website but library details not found	49	International Institute of Information Technology, Bengaluru	No details of Library	Review: 4.8 star; Posts, videos, photos, notices uploaded. Connected to university website but library details not found
50.	Swami Vivekananda Yoga Anusandhana Samthana, Bengaluru	Linked to university website	Review: 4.6 star; photos, posts, videos, notifications uploaded. Connected to university and library. Accessible to digital repository (List), OPAC, e-resources, e-books, e-journals, newspapers.	50	Swami Vivekananda Yoga Anusandhana Samthana, Bengaluru	Linked to University Website	Review: 4.6 star; Photos, posts, videos, notifications uploaded. Connected to university and library. Accessible to digital repository (List), OPAC, e-Resources, e-books, e-journals, newspapers.
Institute of National Importance							
51.	IIM, Bengaluru	Linked to university website	Review: 4.8 star; Photos, posts, notifications, event details Uploaded. Connected to university website and library. Databases, e-resources, OPAC, e-reference services accessible	Videos Uploaded	Posts, photos uploaded	Blocked	-
52.	Indian Statistical Institute, Benglauru	Separate	-	-	-	-	-
53.	National Institute of Technology Karnataka, Suratkal	Separate	Review: 4.7 star; Photos, posts, notifications uploaded. connected to University website and library, accessible to OPAC, e-resources, magazine pages	-	-	-	-

S. No.	University name	Library website	Facebook	Youtube	Linkedin	Twitter	Any other
Extra universities							
54.	Dayanand Sagar University, Bengaluru	No details of library	Review: 4.1 star; Photos, posts, videos, notifications, entrance test information, conference details uploaded. Not linked to University website	-	-	169 tweets, 280 following, 108 followers, 8 likes	Google + - Photos uploaded
55.	Trans-Disciplinary University, Bengaluru	Separate	-	-	-	1308 tweets, 371 following, 85 followers, 342 likes	Google + - Photos uploaded
56.	KLE Technological University, Hubballi	No details of library	Photos, posts, notifications uploaded. Linked to University website	-	-	1 tweet, 39 following, 45 followers	Google + and Flickr - Photos uploaded
57.	Srinivas University, Mangalore	No details of library	Photos, posts, notifications, university profile uploaded. Linked to University website	Videos Up-loaded	Full profile available	83 tweets, 8 followers	-
58.	Institute for Social and Economic Change, Bengaluru	Separate	-	-	-	-	-

3.1.1. Facebook

Facebook members can share photos, send and receive messages, chat, tag themselves or others in photos, write on friend's walls, join groups, create new groups, share new ideas in group discussions, add applications and play games¹³. From Table 1 it is found that libraries of 8 of the 27 (29.62%) State/Central universities are connected to Facebook, while libraries websites of 2 universities show connections towards Facebook but no further links are found. Out of 8 universities libraries it is found that the optimum usage of Facebook is not made, as only few notifications, photos, posts, videos regarding university functions are uploaded. Only Mangalore University, Mangalore and Visveswaraya Technological University, Belagavi have provided linkages to the library web pages through Facebook, and further through the Facebook account the user can access the library services like WebOPAC, e-resources, remote access facility, etc.

9 Private University libraries (75%) are linked to Facebook through their websites, while one University library has connection to Facebook but no further linkages are found. Out of 9 Private Universities only 2 libraries do provide library services like OPAC, Knimbus search, E-Resources, through Facebook. The remaining Private University websites (58.33%, N-7) only provide few notifications, posts, photos, events' videos, profile of universities, etc.

It is also found that a majority of Deemed Universities (66.66%, N-10) are not connected to Facebook while 5 Deemed Universities (33.33%) are connected to Facebook through university websites. Among them websites of Christ University, Bengaluru and Swami Vivekananda Yoga Anusandhana Samsthana, Bengaluru are linked to library webpages through Facebook wherein different services of libraries can be accessed like open access material, repository, research/reference manager, online library, institutional membership, library user manual, library links, library catalogue, digital library, e-books, e-journals, newspapers, etc. Whereas through other university websites we could only find uploading of posts, videos, photos, notifications, activities of universities, latest news, events and so on.

It can thus be analysed that deemed universities are lagging behind in utilising the potentialities of Facebook compared to other categories of universities. Further it can also be interpreted that though more number of private universities are connected to Facebook its optimum usage is not exploited by them and library services like reference, referral and alert services, which could be easily provided with the help of such online social networking services have not been provided.

3.1.2. YouTube

YouTube is a video-sharing website where in one can make available the content including teaching video clips,

TV clips, music videos, and also seminar presentations, education related videos and library related videos like how to search books, OPAC, e-resources, repositories, etc. It is found from Table 1 that only 5 State/Central Universities (18.51%) are connected to Youtube networking service with only 4 Universities accounting for (14.81%) uploading few general videos. Except Tumkur University, Tumkur no other university in the state has uploaded special lectures in its website. Among the Private Universities 8 (75%) are connected to Youtube while only 4 Deemed universities (26.66%) are connected to Youtube. Only few general videos are uploaded by these universities. In true sense the optimum utilisation of the Youtube social networking services is not done by any of the university whether State or Private or Deemed.

3.1.3. *LinkedIn*

LinkedIn is a great way to get posting and finding on jobs, sharing experience and answering questions. It's one of the best locations to connect with current and past co-workers and potentially future employers for professionals to get library patrons connected with the people that can help them find information.

It is found that among State/Central universities only Tumkur University, Tumkur is linked to LinkedIn Networking site with 67 plus followers whereas Gulbarga University website has mentioned the site but shows no further links. No other State/Central University in the state is linked to LinkedIn. Half of the Private Universities (N=6) are linked to LinkedIn Networking site wherein there are great number of followers for Alliance University, Bengaluru and Azim Premji University, Bengaluru. Reva Institute of Technology and Management, Bengaluru has 199 followers and it also provides detailed profile of the university. Rai Technology University, Bengaluru and Srinivas University, Mangalore are also connected to LinkedIn.

Only 2 Deemed Universities (13.33%) namely Jain University, Bengaluru and IIIT, Bengaluru are connected to LinkedIn. IIIT, Bengaluru has huge number of followers and it also updates recent events through LinkedIn. None of the other Deemed Universities are connected to LinkedIn Networking Site. Thus it can be interpreted that the potentialities of LinkedIn are not exploited by a majority of university libraries though few private universities are quite active in the use and adoption of LinkedIn.

3.1.4. *Twitter*

Twitter allows users to write short messages of up to 140 characters, called tweets that can be read by anyone with access to their pages. Users can utilise this platform to type in short messages or status update and also to keep staff and patrons updated on daily activities, like frequently updated collections.

Though 10 State/Central Universities (37.03%) are connected to Twitter only 7 are active. Majority of the

universities account provide general tweets, following and followers. Among them few of the accounts also provide information on university activities, photos, announcements, notifications, few also provide certain official tweets, recruitment tweets and conference tweets also. As far as library services and library related activities are concerned, no tweets are found. All the 12 universities (100%) are connected to Twitter. There are numerous tweets, following and followers. There are photos, posts, likes, lists uploaded in the twitter account of the various university website. Among 15 Deemed universities only 6 (40%) of them have twitter accounts. Only general tweets, following and followers are found and no library related tweets could be traced. It can thus be interpreted that twitter is most popular among the Private Universities, but its utility is restricted to general university inquiry, admissions and other purposes with absolutely no use is made for library activities.

4. OTHER NETWORKING SITES

There are different social networking sites which are useful to provide different libraries services like aNobii helps to share reviews and recommendations on book and also to inform due date alerts and lending services; by creating a blog, any information can be disseminated; A Google+ user profile is a public visible account of a user that is attached to many Google properties. It includes basic social networking services like a profile photo, with directory type biographical sketch. Pinterest is a web and mobile application that operates a photo sharing website. Instagram is an online mobile photo-sharing, video-sharing, and social networking service that enables its users to take pictures and videos, and share them either publicly or privately on the app, as well as through a variety of other social networking platforms; Flickr shares new image collections and can create image sets with metadata.

It is also found from the Table 1 that 5 State Universities (18.51%) are connected to different networking sites. Gulbarga University, Kalaburagi; VTU, Belagavi; Karnataka Samskrit University, Bengaluru; University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad are connected to google plus (Google+) wherein photos are uploaded which are general in nature. VTU is also connected to Flickr which displays general photos uploaded. Bangalore University is connected to BU News through which one can access different library services like webOPAC, ETD Repositories, etc.

8 of the Private Universities (75%) are connected to different social networking sites. Google plus connectivity is found in PES University, Bengaluru; Reva Institute of Technology and Management, Bengaluru; Presidency University, Bengaluru; Rai Technology University, Bengaluru; Dayanand Sagar University, Bengaluru; Trans-Disciplinary University, Bengaluru and KLE Technological University, Hubballi wherein general photos are uploaded. PES University is also connected to Pinterest and Instagram where one can find many posts, photos, following and

followers. Presidency University is also connected to Pinterest, Tumblr, G-mail, E-mail, etc.

Only 4 Deemed Universities are connected to different networking sites. Christ University is connected to Blogspot, Flickr, and Google play. NITTE University is also connected to Blogspot where in only photos are uploaded. Jain University is connected to Google plus, and Instagram and Swami Vivekananda Yoga Anusandhana Samstana is connected to Google plus where general photos are uploaded. Again it can be analysed that these are all used for general purposes and usage of these social media for library purpose is completely neglected.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The study has revealed many facts about use of various social networking services among the University libraries. University libraries are showing inclination towards the adoption and use of such services. But the potentialities of these services need to be assessed properly against the demographic characteristics of the user community it is serving. Keeping in view the importance of social networking site and the need of user community, university libraries should develop a comprehensive Social networking service usage policy. There are differences across the libraries in using social networking services for different purposes, from marketing and promotion, to opening up the resources of the library to providing customer service to many possibilities. It can be used as complimentary tool to traditional services. Since these are quite helpful in providing alert services and also quite helpful in outreach activities, the adoption and usage of social networking services need to be geared up by the university libraries in the state.

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