

# Students' Perception and Utilization of Social Media for Enhancing Academic Library Services

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## Abstrak

Proliferasi media sosial (SM) yang pesat telah merevolusi cara berbagi informasi dan komunikasi, namun potensinya dalam perpustakaan akademik masih belum banyak dieksplorasi. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menyelidiki penggunaan dan aplikasi platform media sosial di Perpustakaan Universitas Dhaka (DUL) untuk mendukung keterlibatan mahasiswa dan akses ke sumber daya. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan mendistribusikan 200 kuesioner tercetak kepada mahasiswa DUL untuk pengumpulan data. Sebanyak 177 tanggapan yang valid dianalisis, dengan tingkat respons sebesar 88,5%. Data diproses menggunakan IBM SPSS untuk mendapatkan wawasan. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa sebagian besar pengguna aktif berbagi informasi melalui platform seperti Facebook, Google+, Twitter, LinkedIn, dan Academia. Meskipun mahasiswa mengakui manfaat SM dalam meningkatkan layanan perpustakaan, kesadaran mereka terhadap potensi kerugiannya masih terbatas. Rekomendasi dikembangkan untuk mahasiswa dan otoritas perpustakaan guna mengoptimalkan penggunaan SM, dengan fokus pada pengembangan penelitian yang berkelanjutan dan pembelajaran jarak jauh. Studi ini menyoroti implikasi bagi pembuat kebijakan, pengembang media sosial, dan pendidik dalam mendorong interaksi daring yang etis dan bermakna. Temuan ini menegaskan peran transformatif SM dalam perpustakaan akademik dan potensinya untuk memperkaya pengalaman belajar di era digital.

**Kata kunci:** Media Sosial; Pengembangan Penelitian Berkelanjutan; Pembelajaran Jarak Jauh; Interaksi Daring

## Abstract

The rapid proliferation of social media (SM) has revolutionized information sharing and communication, yet its potential in academic libraries remains underexplored. This study aims to investigate the usages and applications of social media platforms in the Dhaka University Library (DUL) to facilitate student engagement and resource access. The research adopts a quantitative approach, distributing 200 printed questionnaires to DUL students for data collection. A total of 177 usable responses were analyzed, yielding an 88.5% response rate. Data were processed using IBM SPSS to derive insights. Findings reveal that most users actively share information through platforms such as Facebook, Google+, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Academia. While students acknowledge the benefits of SM in enhancing library services, there is limited awareness of its potential drawbacks. Recommendations were developed for students and library authorities to optimize SM usage, focusing on fostering sustainable research development and distance learning. The study highlights implications for policymakers, social media developers, and educators in promoting ethical and meaningful online interactions. These findings underscore the transformative role of SM in academic libraries and its potential to enrich the learning experience in a digital age.

**Keywords:** Social Media; Sustainable Research Development; Distance Learning; Online Interactions

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Social media (SM) is a collection of online applications that leverage Web 2.0 concepts and technologies to enable content creation and sharing (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010; Nowrin et al., 2024). SM usage has shattered in the past few years. It was invented as a vital communication tool for the general users and students. Its widespread implementation is covered with the entertainment media and news that prompt their viewers to follow on Facebook or other social networking sites (SNSs). These tools have become a vital part of our everyday life. Academic libraries could use these SNSs to disseminate resources and information, market library services, and promote new publications (Burkhardt, 2010; Howard et al., 2018). Social networks are platforms where like-minded people organize to

share thoughts, ideas, and information. Email is one of the oldest forms of SM. Since the age of computers, their use and application have been continuously ongoing and are in their original form. Before there was Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, LinkedIn, YouTube, and other networking sites, people shared their content via email (Yeo, 2021; Zachos et al., 2018). Students utilize SM sites for various purposes and to explore a wide range of interests. Students in higher education were frequent SNS users who typically used many SM platforms at once. Socializing, entertainment, work-related activities, and academic projects were among these endeavors (Anastasya & Wulandari, 2022; Sutama et al., 2022).

Therefore, this study looks at how Bangladeshi University of Dhaka students perceive SM. The institution of Dhaka is the largest and oldest public institution in Bangladesh, having been founded in 1921. This university was chosen because it is the most prominent public university in the nation, with a top-notch staff, a sizable student body, a stellar reputation, and easy access for researchers. In this study, efforts have been made to analyze the students' perceptions and usage of SM in DUL. Thus, the current research significantly contributes to understanding SM usage in Bangladeshi university libraries. Higher authorities will be assisted in making decisions about successful SM-based plans and policies for university libraries by predictable research outcomes. Furthermore, the information gathered from DUL might be utilized to support Bangladesh's other university libraries, which would help this study succeed.

In the mid-2000s, a study indicated that most library employers in the United States did not believe libraries should be involved in social interaction activities (Adetayo & Williams-Ilemobola, 2021; Aiyebelehin & Omekwu, 2019). The focus of libraries on education was considered incompatible with the concept of social networking. SNS's concerns were the lack of time and resources dedicated to social networking tools. The evolution of SM and SNSs is incontestably one of the most remarkable features of the internet in modern years. It enables human interactions through technology. In other words, SM is the media for social communication (Canty, 2013; Luo & Hostetler, 2020). Moreover, it can be used widely, from knowledge to trade and many other areas. The Kimbel Library at Coastal Carolina University mentioned that Facebook has been utilized to offer reference assistance and conduct library services (Graham et al., 2009; Vassilakaki & Garoufallou, 2014). Applications of social networking sites like Web 2.0 have also been highly appreciated for their ability to associate libraries with users who are unaware of existing resources and services. Implementing SM presence is fundamental to meeting user expectations and remaining pertinent, particularly with freshers (Reinstein & Snyder, 2005; Sadeh, 2008). So, this is particularly significant from the perspective of the 21st-century learner. A late study by the Pew Research Center found that 67% of Internet users use some form of SNS, with the measurement growing to 83% for users aged 18-29 (Duggan & Brenner, 2013). Libraries are widely used networking sites that use "Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn, Instagram, Slideshare, Blogging, Skype, Google+, MySpace, Podcast, Research GATE, Mashup, and Flickr."

The librarian is called the knowledge manager, technology gatekeeper, information scientist, and library personnel must have technical knowledge as well as the need to know about present technologies (Husain et al., 2016; Nazim & Mukherjee, 2013). There are many knowledge-sharing social networking sites available on the internet. SM tool's functions may change in the future, but they will exist in some form as long as humans are alive (Irhandyaningsih, 2020; Patel, 2019). The SM posts contained ten codes: archives, collections, events, exhibits, facility, library community, sentiments, services, site management, and the university community. These codes were associated with three main themes: libraries play a role in outreach and advocacy to foster community connection, offer a welcoming atmosphere, and provide access to content as required or desired (Collins, G.,

and Quan-Haase, 2012; Harrison et al., 2017). Libraries have used SM to promote services, new resources, and programs and provide general information. Other benefits may include knowledge sharing and distance learning (Abbas et al., 2022; Wu et al., 2022). As a non-profit organization, libraries have permeated Web 2.0 technologies to facilitate the marketing efforts of library collection, information resources, and services. The convenient use of the Web 2.0 environment allows libraries to utilize various SM channels such as Facebook, Twitter, Blogs, MySpace, YouTube, Widgets, Flickr, Instagram, etc. (Shafawi & Hassan, 2018). In Bangladesh, most of the libraries use "Facebook and LinkedIn" for library marketing, and a noteworthy amount of students generate "Facebook" after entering university (Alarabiat & Al-Mohammad, 2015; Islam & Mostofa, 2015). Students of Dhaka University showed a positive attitude towards academic use of SNSs (Jahan & Ahmed, 2012). Nowrin et al showed in their study that "a diverse range of SM tools favoured by the students at University of Dhaka, showcasing the dynamic nature of their digital engagement. Platforms like Instagram, Twitter, and others play distinctive roles in shaping their online experiences" (Bashir et al., 2021; Nowrin et al., 2024). The research mentioned above makes it abundantly evident that user perceptions of SM in Bangladeshi university libraries need to be looked into. The library's primary users are its customers. However, no study has examined what DUL users expect from social networking platforms. As a result, this study highlights the inadequacies in the earlier research and inspires further investigation into DUL in Bangladesh. By offering fresh data, this study adds to the knowledge of students' opinions about SM and their use of SM in DUL.

## 2. METHODS

The University of Dhaka students who frequently use the university library are the target audience for this study. Being among Bangladesh's top public universities is why this one got selected. A simple random sampling technique was used for this study. A quantitative approach was employed to gather and analyze data from DUL users. A questionnaire comprising close-ended questions was developed for data collection. The data was obtained with the explicit consent of the students through the in-person distribution of the printed questionnaire. The questionnaire was divided into two sections, and the design of the questions aligned with the study's objectives. Two hundred questionnaires were distributed among the students of different faculties who are using DUL. Out of 200 questionnaires, 177 were returned with complete information. The overall response rate was 88.5%. Students were asked to evaluate each questionnaire item from 1-'lowest' to 5-'highest,' corresponding to a five-point Likert scale. After collecting the quantitative data, it was transferred to IBM®SPSS® statistics for analysis. Besides, the information was gathered utilizing the understudies' email locations and telephone numbers, albeit the subtleties were never used for the composition. However, they were assured that this study would not use their identities or other private information. As a result, the student's information cannot be used in a way that is illegal. Consequently, confidentiality has been maintained throughout the project.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Results

#### *Demographic Variables*

**Table 1.** Demographic and Academic Variables

Demographic	Frequency (N=177)	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	95	53.7

Demographic	Frequency (N=177)	Percentage (%)
Female	82	46.3
Age group		
16-18 years	3	1.7
19-21 years	78	44.1
22-24 years	80	45.2
25-27 years	16	9.0
Current study level		
1 <sup>st</sup> year (1 <sup>st</sup> & 2 <sup>nd</sup> semester)	37	12.2
2 <sup>nd</sup> year (3 <sup>rd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> semester)	50	16.4
3 <sup>rd</sup> year (5 <sup>th</sup> & 6 <sup>th</sup> semester)	64	21.1
4 <sup>th</sup> year (7 <sup>th</sup> & 8 <sup>th</sup> semester)	101	33.2
Masters	52	17.1

Table 1 represents the demographic and academic information. Most respondents, i.e., 53.7%, were male, and 46.3% were female. The table also shows that most students (45.2%) were between the ages of 22-24 years, and the lowest number of students (1.7%) was between 16-18 years old, respectively. The highest numbers of respondents (33.2%) were from 4th year (7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> semester) students, and the lowest numbers of respondents (12.2%) were first-year students. The second most significant portion of the respondents, 21.1%, were 3rd year (5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> semester) students, and the third largest portion of the respondents, 17.1%, were from Masters level. Perception and use of SM is show in Table 2.

**Table 2. Perception of Demanding SM Web Page in the Library**

Perception and Use of Social Media	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	167	94.40
No	10	5.60
<b>Total</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Table 2 shows that most students think 'Yes' (94.40%), the SM page is a must to pursue smooth learning from the library. A very negligible percentage of students think about 'No', which is 5.60%. This means that a SM page is significant for a library. Adopting facility from DUL over SM is show in Table 3.

**Table 3. Students Who Are Facilitated Over SM**

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	128	72.30
No	49	27.70
<b>Total</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Table 3 shows how many students have been facilitated from DUL by SNS. Of the 177 respondents, 128 (72.30%) students uphold DUL facilities over SM. On the other hand, 49 (27.70%) students did not use those sites. One of the crucial aims of the survey was to discover the trends of using SM to be facilitated from the library. The survey shows that the trend of using SM in libraries is growing slowly, which indicates the necessary measures to increase the use of SM in DUL. The trend is show in Table 4.

**Table 4.** Trends of Using SM in Libraries

Trends	Frequency	Percent
Growing	37	20.90
Growing slowly	59	33.30
Growing Quickly	33	18.60
<b>Total</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>72.90</b>

Table 4 shows that the majority (33.30%) of students thinks that the trend is growing slowly, while 20.90% believe that it is growing, and the rest, 18.60%, think that the trend of using SM in libraries is growing quickly. The study identified 18 SM tools to investigate the most popular tools to be used widely and which is appropriate, as shown in Table 5.

**Table 5.** Appropriate and Widely Used SM Tools in Libraries

SM Tools	Frequency	Percentage
Facebook	100	56.50
Google+	81	45.80
Twitter	29	16.40
Blogging	23	13.00
LinkedIn	23	13.00
Academia	20	11.30
Slideshare	20	11.30
Wikis	16	9.00
Instagram	14	7.90
Research Gate	12	6.80
Skype	8	4.50
Quora	7	4.00
Podcast	7	4.00
Flickr/Picasa	7	4.00
Myspce	6	3.40
RSS Feeds	5	2.80
Mashup	4	2.30
Others	8	4.50
<b>Total</b>	<b>390</b>	<b>220.50</b>

Notes=Multiples responses were permitted

The results of Table 5 show Facebook is the most relevant and widely used tool by the respondents to be aided by the library. Among 177 students, 56.50% consider Facebook to be mostly used, 45.80% seem Google+, and 2.30% uses Mashup, the lowest ratio of using SM tools in the library. Usages of SM for sharing resources and services in libraries are show in Table 6.

**Table 6.** Usage of SM in Libraries

Statement	Mean	SD
Using social networking in libraries is essential for today's life	4.05	0.891
Social media helps in distance learning and services	4.06	0.882
It aids in building collaborative network between users and libraries	3.76	1.006
It interacts to market library resources and services	3.51	0.821
It is helpful and time saving for library users	4.01	0.824
Libraries can notify users about new arrivals of resources through social media	3.78	1.159

Statement	Mean	SD
Social media helps libraries in union cataloguing	3.70	0.797
It promotes of aiming a better information service to satisfy the needs of users	3.75	0.910
Library resources should be open accessed with assistance of social networking sites	3.80	0.947
Sharing library resources is the main objectives of using social media in library	3.67	0.986

According to [Table 6](#), the mean and SD of students' views on the use of SM for sharing resources and services in libraries are presented on a five-point scale. Among the statements, SM helps in distance learning and services, and using social networking in libraries is essential for today's life, as it obtained the highest mean score, i.e., 4.06 and 4.05, respectively. While, it interacts to market library resources and services obtained the lowest mean score, i.e., 3.51. The results indicate that students generally agree with using SM, as all ratings above three and three statements receive ratings above four. Main purpose of using SNS in DUL is show in [Table 7](#).

**Table 7. Main Purpose of Using SNS in Libraries**

Statement	Mean	SD
For sharing library resources and services	3.80	1.003
For facilitating multi-accessed	3.94	0.908
For marketing library resources	3.55	0.938
For sharing related links	3.41	0.949
For giving remote access to library resources	3.68	0.968
For increasing library's image and reputation	3.66	0.888
For keeping the users up-to-date	4.05	0.909
For research work and tagging related resources	3.54	0.901
For sharing library's news and events	3.81	0.798
For advertising library resources	3.57	0.917

[Table 7](#) displays the average and standard deviation of library students' viewpoints on using SM in DUL. The data indicates that students strongly support using SM in DUL, with all ratings exceeding three except for the opinion on 'keeping the users' up-to-date' (4.05). Problems in using SM in libraries are show in [Table 8](#).

**Table 8. Problems in Using SM in Libraries**

Statement	Mean	SD
Website is difficult to use and understand	3.00	1.138
Too many unwanted links in the website	3.47	1.017
Lack of security and privacy	3.61	1.000
Unauthentic source of available information	3.46	1.060
Lack of training opportunities for library staff	3.66	1.005
Irregular power supply	3.37	1.205
Lack of financial support	3.77	1.142
Poor access to the internet and voltage	3.94	0.995
Lack of social media tools	3.70	1.042
Lack of skilled and trained manpower	4.07	1.003
Lack of awareness and management support	4.16	1.060

Table 8 depicts the mean and SD of students' perspectives on SM usage problems at DUL. The table indicates that students largely agree on the problems associated with using SM at DUL, as most ratings exceed three. Lack of awareness and management support (Mean=4.16; SD=1.060) and Lack of skilled and trained manpower (Mean=4.07; SD=1.003) are the major problems in using SM in libraries. Probable solutions using SNSs in DUL is show in Table 9.

**Table 9. Probable Solutions for Using SNSs in DUL**

Statement	Mean	SD
Libraries should organize technical training for the staff related to easy implementation process of social media	4.14	0.884
Libraries can be partners with international funding agencies, non-governmental organizations, and alumni of their institutions	4.10	0.844
Effective measures of increasing fund allocation should be ensured	4.10	0.784
Organizing a public awareness forum on a regular basis, i.e., library orientation, conferences, symposia, and workshops to create awareness	4.00	0.826
Ensure infrastructural and well internet facilities	4.11	0.804
Resources should be updated accordingly	4.31	0.810
Libraries should provide authentic sources of available information	4.29	0.820
Easy access and availability of social media tools should be increased	4.32	0.814

Table 9 presents the mean and SD of students' perspectives on potential solutions for utilizing SNSs in DUL. The data indicates that most students strongly agree with the possible solutions for using SNSs in DUL, as most ratings exceed four. Among the statements, easy access and availability of SM tools should be increased (Mean=4.32; SD=0.814), and resources should be updated accordingly (Mean=4.31; SD=0.810). While organizing a public awareness forum, i.e., library orientation, conferences, symposia, and workshops to create awareness (Mean=4.0; SD=0.826) obtained the lowest mean score.

## Discussion

SM has gained much popularity among the students. Nowadays, students are more involved with it and are concerned with upcoming trends in communication. SNSs can improve all possible ways of organizational learning and self-education. Data analysis of the survey shows that most students acknowledged that the library should have its own SM web page. Their point of view indicates that trends in library SM use are growing slowly. DUL has facilitated most of them over SM, but a few students have not. Students use SM in libraries to share resources and services (Ariani, 2011; Li et al., 2020). Most students claimed that the facilities provided by the university administration to the library users are not satisfactory compared to many students. The results indicate that students generally agree with using SM. This finding aligns with the findings state that SM enables users to create, engage in conversations, and share information (Khan & Bhatti, 2012). So this, in turn, helps libraries and information centers to better connect with users, facilitate distance learning, and encourages knowledge sharing. They also suggested that the university authority should promote the wide-ranged access of SM and uninterrupted internet facilities so that the students can get facilities from so far (Almasi et al., 2017; Ngabekti et al., 2019). They also focused on the fact that the present arena is digitalized, and everyone has smartphones and other available electronic devices with easy internet access, so the authorities should take measures as the student benefit from the library with their easy access to modern devices. They also recommended that it should be a time-saving and cost-efficient process. Libraries are using SM as a tool for community affairs. University libraries use SM tools to notify their

users about new materials, services, and resources and to give information about library materials and research techniques (Syafri et al., 2021; Yulius, 2020). They are also used to create promotions and social and cultural activities.

Furthermore, libraries should make their SM policy, resources, and accounts accessible and available from their web pages. The research found that students largely agree on the problems associated with using SM at DUL, as lack of awareness and management support, lack of skilled and trained manpower, poor internet connection, and voltage are the major problems in libraries using SM. These findings align with similar research, which found that voltage problems are the primary issue for marketing libraries and information services on SM in Pakistan (Khan & Bhatti, 2012). This investigation will have suggestions for students, tutors, policymakers, and web-based entertainment stages that help significant and capable internet-based communications. This research, like all others, must contend with a few limitations. First, there is a small sample size. In this way, the discoveries can't be summed up according to the specific circumstances, assuming that the reviews were done at different libraries in Bangladesh (Ali et al., 2023; Lim et al., 2020). Second, the analyst hasn't gotten any subsidies or monetary help to lead this examination. The scope of future research was also shown by the current research. In Bangladesh, only the quantitative research approach and DUL were used in this study. As a result, officials from the DUL and other public universities can be included in a comprehensive mixed-method study on the same topic.

This research shows the importance of using social media (SM) in libraries to support learning, share information, and increase user engagement. The practical implication is that universities, especially DUL, can develop more effective library digital marketing strategies through SM. Universities also need to provide stable internet access and supporting infrastructure, such as modern devices and trained workforce, to increase the effectiveness of SM use in libraries (Asokan et al., 2019; Hamdani et al., 2019). Additionally, clear policies regarding library SM account management are important to expand accessibility and interaction with users. University libraries can also utilize SM to provide notifications about new resources, services, and social and cultural activities, which can increase the library's appeal among students. The results of this research can be a basis for further research to explore the use of SM in the library context with a mixed research approach involving various parties, such as policy makers, library managers, and students from other universities.

This research has several limitations. First, the small number of respondents limits the generalization of the results to a wider context, so research with a larger sample size is needed. Second, this research only focused on DUL, so the results may be less relevant for libraries at other universities. Further research involving several universities could provide more comprehensive insight. Third, research approaches that only use quantitative methods do not explore in-depth insights from the experiences of library users or managers. Therefore, a mixed approach that includes qualitative methods will provide a richer understanding. Fourth, this research was conducted without financial support or subsidies, which may have limited the scope and depth of the analysis. Financial support in future research could help explore this issue more

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

Based on the findings, the study recommends several measures to ensure the sustainable use of social networking sites (SNSs) in libraries. First, accessibility should be improved by increasing the availability of social media tools and ensuring their ease of use, while resources should be updated regularly to meet students' evolving needs. Libraries must provide authentic information sources and enhance infrastructural facilities with reliable internet access. To



address funding challenges, collaborations with international funding agencies, non-governmental organizations, and institutional alumni can help secure additional resources. Additionally, organizing technical training for library staff is essential to streamline the implementation of social media tools. Public awareness initiatives, such as library orientations, conferences, symposia, and workshops, should be conducted regularly to inform users about the advantages of social media in library services. Furthermore, SNS platforms must enhance their security and privacy measures, while libraries should establish policies to ensure the safe use of personal information. Copyrighted materials, such as videos, music, photos, and documents, can be responsibly shared, with SNS platforms taking steps to prevent copyright violations. Lastly, training and awareness programs should be implemented to educate students on the applications, benefits, and risks associated with SNSs.

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