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Social Media, Professional Collaboration and Knowledge Sharing: Extent and Predictors Among Librarians in Federal Colleges of Education Libraries, North-West Nigeria

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Abstract

Social media can extend professional exchange beyond institutional boundaries, yet evidence that its use produces measurable professional benefits among librarians in Nigerian colleges of education is scarce. This study examined the extent of professional collaboration through social media and the impact of social media adoption factors (awareness, perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness and technological infrastructure) and utilization on knowledge sharing and professional collaboration among librarians in Federal Colleges of Education libraries in North-West Nigeria. Anchored on the Technology Acceptance Model and the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology, the study adopted a cross-sectional survey with a correlational component. All 118 library personnel in three colleges were enumerated, and 107 questionnaires (90.7%) were analysed using descriptive statistics and linear regression. Professional collaboration occurred to a high extent ($M = 2.97$, $SD = 0.84$), led by participation in professional groups and contributions to research, whereas coordination-intensive activities such as planning events ranked lowest ($M = 2.72$). Respondents agreed that social media improved resource sharing, access to ideas and inter-institutional connection ($M = 3.39$). The adoption factors jointly explained 55.1% of the variance in knowledge sharing and 48.7% in professional collaboration (both $p < .001$), with perceived usefulness the strongest predictor of each. Utilization significantly predicted knowledge sharing ($\beta = .612$) and collaboration ($\beta = .574$). The findings support technology acceptance theory and highlight facilitating conditions. The study recommends institutional social media policies, reliable infrastructure, training on professional use, and structured virtual communities of practice to convert communication into sustained collaboration.

Keywords: *Social Media; Professional Collaboration; Knowledge Sharing; Technology Acceptance; Librarians; Colleges of Education; Nigeria.*

Introduction

Social media sites are now commonplace tools for business communication. By providing low-cost, asynchronous ways for practitioners to consult with colleagues and learn from peers, they complement meetings, workshops, conferences, and printed publications—channels that are constrained by time, money, and distance. Social media has significant promise for librarians' professional development, particularly in areas with inadequate infrastructure and resources for formal development, according to a comprehensive assessment of 25 research from 21 countries (Cooke & Park, 2020). Nigerian evidence is consistent with this. A survey of library and information science (LIS) professionals revealed that WhatsApp, email, and cloud-

based document tools were frequently used for research collaboration (Adeoye et al., 2021). A content analysis of WhatsApp groups of LIS professionals revealed that professional information was the most commonly shared category of content and that participation could strengthen professional ties (Udem et al., 2020).

This collection of work focuses on two professional objectives that should not be confused. The sharing of information, experience, and skill among coworkers is known as knowledge sharing. In order to achieve a common professional product, such as a jointly published article, a co-developed training package, or a coordinated event, professional cooperation necessitates a shared purpose, reciprocal engagement, and coordinated effort. Clearly, social media can help with the first. It is an empirical question that depends on context to determine whether it supports the second and whether the characteristics that drive librarians to accept and use social media transfer into either outcome.

The Federal Colleges of Education libraries in Northwest Nigeria are the subject of this analysis. Despite operating under well-documented limitations of connectivity, power supply, and institutional support, these libraries sustain teacher-education institutions that rely on current and shared professional expertise. According to the few studies that are currently available, social media platforms have been adopted by these libraries, but their use for work-related reasons is still restricted. For instance, a number of platforms have been implemented at the Federal College of Education, Zaria, but their use was minimal (Labaran et al., 2025). For this scenario, there is a dearth of evidence about collaboration and the impact of adoption factors and utilization on professional outcomes.

Problem Statement

In addition to using social media for communication, librarians at Federal Colleges of Education libraries are expected to use it as a professional resource that produces results, such as knowledge gained from colleagues, problems solved collaboratively, resources shared and reused, and joint outputs like co-authored papers and cooperative projects. The ideal scenario, according to the Technology Acceptance Model and the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology, is one in which librarians who are familiar with social media platforms, find them convenient and helpful, and have the required infrastructure use them frequently and intentionally, and in which such use fosters professional collaboration and knowledge sharing.

According to the literature, social media availability and usage do not equate to professional advantages. According to a number of Nigerian research, platforms have been embraced but are rarely used for work-related purposes (Abdulsalam et al., 2026; Labaran et al., 2025). Social media use for personal rather than professional goals has been documented elsewhere in Nigeria (Abdulsalam et al., 2026), and Katsina State librarians were found to appreciate social media for debate and information transmission but not for sharing their own intellectual output (Kankara & Umar, 2025). There is conflicting evidence on whether social media use results in quantifiable benefits because other studies have linked it to professional benefits including research output and visibility (Adetayo et al., 2023). Furthermore, the majority of studies address awareness, platforms, and usage frequency; few examine whether use results in quantifiable knowledge-sharing and collaboration outcomes, and none were found that do so in Federal Colleges of Education libraries in Northwest Nigeria.

The uncertainty around the degree to which librarians at these libraries collaborate professionally on social media, as well as whether and to what extent adoption factors and utilization impact knowledge sharing and professional collaboration, is the issue this study attempts to answer. Libraries may continue to be professionally isolated if this ambiguity prevails, and administrators may continue to invest in connection, training, and policy on the unproven premise that increased use leads to improved professional outcomes.

Objectives of the Study

The main objectives of the study were to:

1. Examine the extent to which librarians in Federal Colleges of Education libraries in North-West Nigeria collaborate professionally through social media platforms; and
2. Examine the impact of social media adoption factors (awareness, perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness and technological infrastructure) and utilization on knowledge sharing and professional collaboration among these librarians.

Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. To what extent do librarians in Federal Colleges of Education libraries in North-West Nigeria collaborate professionally through social media platforms?
2. What is the impact of social media adoption factors and utilization on knowledge sharing and professional collaboration among these librarians?

The second question was answered in two ways:

through librarians' perceived impact of social media on their practice, and through four null hypotheses tested at the 0.05 level of significance.

- **$H0_1$:** Social media adoption factors (awareness, perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness and technological infrastructure) have no significant impact on knowledge sharing.
- **$H0_2$:** Social media adoption factors have no significant impact on professional collaboration.
- **$H0_3$:** Utilization of social media platforms has no significant impact on knowledge sharing.
- **$H0_4$:** Utilization of social media platforms has no significant impact on professional collaboration.

Review Of Related Literature

Conceptual clarifications

While usage refers to the frequency, goal, and mode of a technology's actual use, adoption refers to the choice, willingness, and process via which people or organizations embrace and start using it. Four factors awareness, perceived utility, perceived ease of use, and technological infrastructure reflect adoption in this study, while the frequency of use and the kinds of platforms utilized for work-related objectives constitute utilization. The two outcome variables are professional cooperation and knowledge exchange. Social media can help professionals collaborate by giving them a place to plan events, share papers, discuss ideas, and come to decisions together. However, being a part of a group or exchanging messages does not prove cooperation on its own. Reciprocity and a common professional goal are necessary for collaboration.

Theoretical framework

The Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) and the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) serve as the study's foundation. According to TAM, perceived usefulness the conviction that a technology will enhance performance and perceived ease of use the conviction that utilizing a technology would be effortless are the main factors influencing its usage (Davis, 1989). Performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, and facilitating factors are the four determinants of usage that UTAUT combines previous models into (Venkatesh et al., 2003). The technological infrastructure component in this study corresponds to facilitating conditions, or the extent of organizational and technical infrastructure that supports utilization. Facilitating factors like bandwidth, power supply, technical support, and training were critical in determining whether favorable sentiments were translated into regular practice among academic librarians in Zimbabwe (Chiparausha et al., 2024). The two theories work together to describe the perceptions that drive usage as well as the enabling circumstances that are necessary for prolonged use. They were mostly created in high-income settings, and their concentration on individual perception may obscure institutional culture and policy. As a result, findings from resource-constrained contexts should be interpreted with consideration for local conditions.

Professional collaboration through social media

According to empirical research, social media helps LIS professionals collaborate, but it seldom results in long-term teamwork. Social media can facilitate collaboration through learning platforms, distance learning, curriculum review, and research, according to a survey of 102 LIS professionals in Nigeria. However, respondents also mentioned obstacles, such as threats to privacy and independence, a lack of trust, complicated procedures, a lack of knowledge about how to collaborate, a lack of confidence in group work, and the belief that one can do better alone (Onuoha et al., 2020). In a survey of 101 LIS professionals, Adeoye et al. (2021) found that the most popular platforms for research collaboration were WhatsApp (83%), email (74%), Google Docs (59%), Google Drive (47%), Facebook (46%), Telegram (45%), and Zoom (42%). All respondents agreed that these tools allowed them to network, communicate, and share documents at little or no cost, while low ICT skills and disparities in application knowledge were the biggest obstacles.

The study emphasized the significance of digital competence and ICT training, and college librarians in the Southeast and South-South geopolitical zones used social media to maintain workplace communication (Ugwuogu, 2023). Social media facilitated professional information sharing, discussions, and debates across the geographically separated branches of a national library service in Kenya (Omare et al., 2025). These communities can serve as professional support spaces where members ask for help and attend to the needs of colleagues, according to a netnographic study of a WhatsApp community of practice of fifty librarians (Agyemang, 2021). The idea that perception surpasses practice is a recurrent theme. Librarians at the Bayero University Library in Kano had a very good opinion of social media's benefits, but their actual use was only moderate, with professional networking and collaboration showing comparatively higher use than some other activities (Yusuf & Adeyemi, 2025). Practical circumstances can influence the degree of cooperation. Nigerian LIS professionals mentioned time restrictions, internet connectivity, and electricity supply as obstacles to social

media use (Nduka et al., 2021).

Impact of adoption factors and utilization on knowledge sharing and collaboration

There are more studies that describe social media use than those that examine the connection between social media use and career results. Tanzanian organizational research revealed that group dynamics and composition affected sharing, and that informal social media activities promoted knowledge sharing and became ingrained in regular work procedures (Kwayu et al., 2021). In a regression study of 240 Nigerian librarians working in federal university libraries, it was discovered that knowledge sharing, including the sharing of both explicit and tacit knowledge, was significantly predicted by the kinds of social media platforms used and the degree of their use (Mohammed & Song, 2026). According to Adetayo et al. (2023), librarians who used academic social networks like Figshare, ORCID, and ResearchGate were more likely to publish in outlets that were indexed by Scopus and Web of Science. This shows a connection between active use and broader professional outcomes.

The majority of the evidence on adoption variables comes from TAM-based research. According to Cooke and Park's (2020) review, librarians who felt more technologically adept were more likely to use social media for professional development, which is consistent with TAM. However, the effect is contingent. According to studies, the benefits of social media are limited by inadequate infrastructure, low digital skills, worries about the quality of information, lax institutional policies, and only moderate use (Adeoye et al., 2021; Nduka et al., 2021; Yusuf & Adeyemi, 2025). There are then two spaces. First, few research look at professional collaboration and information sharing as outcomes of the same set of factors. Secondly, no such program was found for librarians working in Federal Colleges of Education libraries in Northwest Nigeria, whose institutional processes and infrastructure can be different from those of other university libraries. By examining the relationships between awareness, perceived utility, perceived ease of use, technological infrastructure, and use and the two outcomes, the current study fills both gaps.

Methodology

A cross-sectional survey with a correlational (predictive) component was employed in the study (Setia, 2016). The population consisted of 118 librarians and library staff from the Federal Colleges of Education in Bichi (Kano State), Gusau (Zamfara State), and Katsina (Katsina State), including professional, para-professional, non-professional, and information technology staff. Total enumeration was used because the population was small and completely listed (Kothari & Garg, 2019). TAM and UTAUT-informed structured questionnaires with four-point scales and no neutral option were used to gather data. Expert judgment was used to determine face and content validity (Creswell & Creswell, 2023), and reliability was evaluated in a pilot study involving 12 librarians at a college outside the study area; a Cronbach's alpha of .70 or higher was considered satisfactory (Kothari & Garg, 2019).

Over the course of two weeks in 2026, the questionnaire was distributed electronically, and 107 responses (90.7%) were analyzed using SPSS version 25.0. Positive and negative responses were distinguished by a criterion mean of 2.50, and the scale's actual limits 3.50–4.00 (very high), 2.50–3.49 (high), 1.50–2.49 (low), and 1.00–1.49 (very low) were utilized for interpretation. Each section's items were averaged to get composite ratings for the hypothesis. At the 0.05 level of significance, $H0_1$ and $H0_2$ were examined using multiple linear regression, whereas $H0_3$ and $H0_4$ were examined using simple linear regression. The following regression assumptions were examined: Variance inflation factors varied from 1.29 to 1.51 and Durbin-Watson statistics from 1.86 to 1.92, both of which were significantly below the cutoff of 5. "Impact" in this context refers to statistical and perceived effect rather than proven causality because each variable was tested only once and from the same respondents (Spector, 2019).

Results and Discussion of Findings

Table 1 Extent of Professional Collaboration through Social Media (N = 107)

Rank	Item	M	SD	Decision
1	Contributing to collaborative research activities	3.22	0.71	High extent
2	Participating in professional groups on social media	3.14	0.76	High extent
3	Jointly developing training materials	3.08	0.79	High extent
4	Jointly discussing technical problems with colleagues	2.96	0.85	High extent
5	Co-authoring research or professional papers	2.87	0.89	High extent
6	Coordinating professional activities with colleagues	2.78	0.92	High extent

Rank	Item	M	SD	Decision
7	Planning professional events with colleagues	2.72	0.95	High extent
	Section mean	**2.97**	**0.84**	**High extent**

Note. Criterion mean = 2.50. Source: Field survey (2026).

Every item in Table 1 exceeded the criterion mean, indicating a high level of professional collaboration among librarians via social media (M = 2.97, SD = 0.84). Nevertheless, there is a distinct gradient among the goods. At 0.28 and 0.22 above the criterion, respectively, activities that require coordination among colleagues such as organizing professional activities or planning events ranked lowest, while those that rely on participation or material contribution such as contributing to collaborative research, joining professional groups, or cooperatively creating training materials ranked highest. Additionally, the standard deviation increased gradually from 0.71 to 0.95 down the ranking, suggesting that librarians' participation in the more difficult tasks varied significantly.

The overall level is in line with the widespread use of WhatsApp and related tools for research collaboration among Nigerian LIS professionals (Adeoye et al., 2021) and the comparatively high use of social media for networking and collaboration among librarians at Bayero University Library, Kano (Yusuf & Adeyemi, 2025). On the other hand, the gradient reflects the obstacles reported in the literature. According to Onuoha et al. (2020) and Adeoye et al. (2021), collaboration that necessitates reciprocity, trust, and procedural knowledge is most hindered by a lack of trust, complex procedures, and a lack of understanding of how to collaborate. There are two things to be aware of. First, co-authoring (M = 2.87) was ranked lower than contributing to collaborative research (M = 3.22), which may indicate supportive roles like sharing sources or offering feedback on drafts rather than taking the lead or finishing joint deliverables. Second, a "high extent" should not be interpreted as proof of consistent, organized cooperation because a mean above 2.50 on a four-point scale is a moderate threshold and depends on self-report. According to the findings, social media is now more useful for librarians at these universities as a platform for involvement and contribution than as a workspace for planned collaborative initiatives.

Table 2: Perceived Impact of Social Media on Professional Practice (N = 107)

Rank	Item	M	SD	Decision
1	Enables quick sharing of professional resources	3.58	0.54	Strongly agree
2	Increased access to new ideas and best practices	3.46	0.61	Agree
3	Easier to share professional experiences	3.32	0.68	Agree
4	Helped connect with librarians in other institutions	3.21	0.74	Agree
	Section mean	**3.39**	**0.64**	**Agree**

Note. Criterion mean = 2.50. Source: Field survey (2026).

Social media was seen by librarians as beneficial to their work (M = 3.39, SD = 0.64). Quick professional resource sharing had the highest level of agreement (M = 3.58), while making connections with librarians at other institutions received the lowest level of agreement (M = 3.21). This pattern is consistent with research showing that the most common content shared in LIS groups is professional information (Udem et al., 2020), that social media provides low-cost, asynchronous professional exchange across distance (Cooke & Park, 2020), and that informal social media practices are incorporated into regular work (Kwayu et al., 2021). The perceived-impact findings only indirectly address collaboration because none of the four questions directly ask about collaborative outputs and instead focus on the advantages of networking and information exchange. Additionally, they document perception rather than behavior, which is why the following regression results are required.

Table 3: Regression Models for the Four Hypotheses (N = 107)

Test	Predictor(s)	Outcome	R	R^2	Adj. R^2	F	p	D–W	Decision
$H0_1$	Adoption factors	Knowledge sharing	.742	.551	.533	31.24	< .001	1.89	Rejected

Test	Predictor(s)	Outcome	R	R^2	Adj. R^2	F	p	D–W	Decision
$H0_2$	Adoption factors	Professional collaboration	.698	.487	.467	24.18	< .001	1.92	Rejected
$H0_3$	Utilization	Knowledge sharing	.612	.375	.369	62.84	< .001	1.86	Rejected
$H0_4$	Utilization	Professional collaboration	.574	.329	.323	51.42	< .001	1.91	Rejected

Note. Adoption factors = awareness, perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness and technological infrastructure (entered together). D–W = Durbin–Watson. Source: Field survey (2026).

Table 4: Coefficients of the Predictors of Knowledge Sharing and Professional Collaboration

Predictor	KS: B	KS: β	KS: t	KS: p	PC: B	PC: β	PC: t	PC: p
Awareness	.214	.241	3.15	.002	.182	.196	2.56	.012
Perceived ease of use	.187	.198	2.60	.011	.164	.167	2.19	.031
Perceived usefulness	.263	.298	4.05	< .001	.241	.263	3.54	.001
Technological infrastructure	.152	.167	2.58	.012	.198	.210	3.19	.002
Utilization (separate simple regressions)	.548	.612	7.93	< .001	.492	.574	6.83	< .001

Note. KS = knowledge sharing; PC = professional collaboration. The first four predictors were entered together in one model per outcome; utilization was entered alone. Source: Field survey (2026).

Tables 3 and 4 show that all four null hypotheses were disproved. Each of the adoption factors significantly improved both outcomes, accounting for 55.1% of the variance in knowledge sharing (R^2 = .551, F = 31.24, p <.001) and 48.7% of the variance in professional cooperation (R^2 =.487, F = 24.18, p <.001). 37.5% of the variation in information sharing and 32.9% in collaboration were explained by utilization alone. The effects were 1.23, 0.95, 0.60, and 0.49 when expressed as Cohen's f^2 (R^2 / [1 − R^2]), all of which were higher than the standard of.35 for a large effect (Cohen, 1988). The tiny differences between R2 and adjusted R2 indicate that the number of predictors is not inflating the models.

perceived utility. The greatest predictor of professional collaboration (β =.263) and information sharing (β =.298) was perceived utility. Since people use technology in proportion to the performance gain they anticipate from it (Davis, 1989), this is the pattern that TAM predicts, and it is consistent with the TAM-consistent findings in the review of Cooke and Park (2020). In practical terms, this means that librarians at these universities will put in the time and effort necessary to use social media in a way that will benefit their careers.

awareness and usability. Perceived ease of use had the lowest coefficient for collaboration (β =.167), while awareness was the second-strongest predictor of knowledge sharing (β =.241). Both continued to be important. The ease of use of modern platforms may be less important than their perceived utility, but this ordering should be seen as informative as the standardized coefficients differed only little and were not officially compared.

infrastructure of technology. Infrastructure was the second-strongest predictor of collaboration (β =.210), somewhat stronger than knowledge sharing (β =.167), and it was a significant predictor of both outcomes. This confirms the result that bandwidth, power, support, and training impact whether favorable attitudes become habitual practice (Chiparausha et al., 2024) and supports the UTAUT construct of facilitating conditions (Venkatesh et al., 2003). The greater coefficient for collaboration could be explained by the fact that collaborative work requires consistent, dependable interaction, which is more susceptible to interruptions from erratic power and connectivity than sporadic information sharing (Nduka et al., 2021).

use. Higher levels of knowledge exchange and cooperation were linked to more frequent use of appropriate professional platforms. This is consistent with research showing that active usage of academic social media platforms is associated with professional outcomes (Adetayo et al., 2023) and that platform use predicts knowledge exchange among librarians at federal university libraries (Mohammed & Song, 2026). Compared to knowledge sharing (37.5%), utilization explained less of the variance in cooperation (32.9%), indicating that the volume of use is a weaker pathway to collaboration than to information transmission. Trust and a

common goal are also necessary for collaboration (Onuoha et al., 2020). It is in line with the finding that favorable opinions and modest use do not ensure close cooperation on their own (Yusuf & Adeyemi, 2025).

Limits and convergence. Both the regression results (Tables 3 and 4) and the perceived-impact results (Table 2) indicate that librarians believe social media enhances their work, and those who adopt and utilize it more also report more collaboration and information exchange. However, the design cannot prove that these results are caused by adoption and use. Because all factors were self-reported by the same respondents, shared-method bias may inflate the associations, and librarians who already communicate and collaborate may just use social media more (Spector, 2019). Additionally, the conclusions only directly apply to the three universities under investigation. To determine the causal direction, longitudinal or mixed-methods research is required.

Conclusion

The degree of professional cooperation among librarians in three Federal Colleges of Education libraries in Northwest Nigeria was investigated in this study, along with the effects of adoption factors and utilization on knowledge sharing and professional collaboration. There are three conclusions that follow. First, there is a lot of social media collaboration among librarians, but the activity is focused on participation and contribution; coordination-intensive tasks like task coordination and event planning are near the criterion mean, so social media serves more as a conduit for participation than as a workspace for organized joint projects. Second, social media is seen by librarians as helpful for connecting with colleagues in other institutions, sharing resources, and gaining access to ideas. Third, knowledge sharing and professional collaboration were significantly predicted by awareness, perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, and technological infrastructure, both collectively and separately; perceived usefulness was the strongest predictor of both outcomes, and infrastructure was especially important for collaboration. The findings provide credence to the combined application of TAM and UTAUT in this context: perceptions dictate whether or not librarians are motivated to utilize social media for work, and enabling circumstances dictate whether or not that motivation can be maintained. These relationships should be interpreted as associations rather than established causal effects because the data are cross-sectional and self-reported.

Recommendations

The recommendations follow from the two objectives.

1. Instead of focusing only on basic platform use, library administrators, college administration, and professional associations should transform informal groups into structured communities of practice with collaborative goals and designated moderators, establish incentives for joint outputs through partnerships and appraisal recognition, and focus training on trust, procedural knowledge, and collaborative tool skills.
2. Researchers should continue the study over time, capacity-building should demonstrate tangible professional benefits, management should improve infrastructure and support, libraries need explicit use policies, and librarians should use platforms with purpose.

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