

Application and Use of Social Networking Sites for Promoting Archival Resources in the National Archives of Nigeria: An Integrated Framework Based on the Assumptions of Unified Theory and Use of Technology (UTAUT)

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Abstract

The emergence and integration of new technological innovation and services forced Professionals from a different domain to identify the appropriate technology and facilities that can be applied to prove their professional practice and services. Notable among the new technological innovations was the emergence of Social Networking Sites platforms, which make it possible for professionals to communicate and share ideas with colleagues as well as enhance their practices and relationships with their clients. Archivists as professionals were not left out of this trend, as information professionals, they are to identify the appropriate platforms that they can be better applied to increase the visibility and public awareness with regards to the existence of archival institutions and promote the use of archival resources. With the application of modern technology platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, What Sapp, Skype, LinkedIn etc. Archival personnel have no alternative but to sort out the appropriate technological innovations and platforms that can be applied to enhance the services and activities of archival agencies. The paper was framed to serve a model specifically for the adoption of social networking technology in the services and operations of archival institutions in Nigeria. The paper was developed based on the assumptions of Unified Theory and Used of Technology. The assumptions of the model were cross-examined critically and evaluated within the perspective of the Nigerian Archival Institutions.

Keywords: Archives, Framework, Promotion, Social Networking Sites and Theory.

Introduction

Archives constitute documented by-product of human activities retained for their long term historical, research, reference and other value. The concept can equally be used to refer to a building where historical and other documents with historical and reference value kept for public consultation. There is no doubt that archives play an important role in society as they enable people and organisations to connect their present with the past and decide upon what should happen in the future. Archives is the last phase of both records and information lifecycle, just as it is said in ordinary, 'from cradle to the grave' it can also be said of records and information 'creation to the archives'. The archives represent the terminal point of any record or information that is of enduring administrative, research and historical value.

The advent of the Internet in the 21st century has revolutionized the operations and services of workplaces and professionals including Archives and archivists. Among the most influential tools of the internet in recent times are social networking sites. The strength of social networking sites lies in their ability to enhance

interactions and relationships among people. The concept of social networking sites refers to the internet-based technology used to stay connected with friends, family, colleagues, customers or clients through the use of the platforms such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, Instagram, etc. Social networking sites can have a social purpose, business purpose or both, through sites such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram among others (Asur, 2012)

However, in recognition of the benefits associated with the utilisation of social networking sites for promoting business and organizational recognition, Jimmerson, (2014) mentioned some of the benefits related to social networking sites application include: time-saving, cost-effectiveness, exciting and stimulating, instant interaction with the community, creative, a range of social media channels for marketing, bring users closer to the organization, collaborative and interactive. The integration of social networking platforms in archives operations has been a topic of interest, investigation, and experimentation for quite some time, generating ideas reflected in numerous papers and conference presentations.

From the author experience gathered through surveyed of literature and preliminary studies, there is no standard framework worldwide that can guide archival personnel to apply and use social networking sites platforms in the services of archival institutions in general and for promoting the use of archival resources in particular. It is therefore against this background, that the author attempts to a conceptual framework for the application and use of social networking sites specifically for promoting the use of archival resources in the National Archives of Nigeria (Ubale, 2019). Equally, the proposed framework can also be applied in other related agencies with similar functions, such as libraries, museums and any institutions or organisations that found the framework appropriate for addressing their objectives.

The acceptance and use of information system (IS) and information technology (IT) innovations have become a major concern for research and practice. Researchers from different domain have proposed and utilized numerous information technology (IT) application and use models to fully explain and predict the use of modern technology and its acceptance among information users. These include the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) and Model of Personal Computer Utilization (PCU) (Diwevedi, 2019). The used Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT), and its major theoretical assumptions and understanding on the application and use of social networking sites for promoting the use of archival resources in the National Archives of Nigeria. UTAUT is well known for explaining and predicting user acceptance and use of IT in the IS.

Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT)

The theory was purposively developed to be a model for integrating the accepted technology for use in the information system. The Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology was first introduced by Venkatesh, Thong, J. Y., L., & Xu (2003) by integrating different functions related components of user

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acceptance and use of information technology models and produced the unified theory of acceptance and use of technology (UTAUT). As a tailor-made theory, the theory was developed through a review and consolidation of the constructs of eight models *used by previous researches* had employed to explain information systems usage behaviour (theory of reasoned action (TRA), technology acceptance model (TAM) motivational model (MM), the theory of planned behaviour (TPB), a combined theory of planned behaviour/technology acceptance model (C-TAM-TPB), a model of personal computer use(MPC), diffusion of innovations theory (DIT), and social cognitive theory (SCT).

The Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology identifies four key factors, the first three are direct determinants of usage intention and behaviour, and the fourth is a direct determinant of user behaviour (i.e., performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, and facilitating conditions) and four moderators are posited to moderate the impact of the four key constructs on usage intention and behaviour (i.e., age, gender, experience, and voluntariness) related to predicting behavioural intention to use technology and actual technology used primarily in organizational contexts. According to Venkatesh et-al (2003), UTAUT functionally related components (performance expectancy, effort expectancy, and social influence were theorized and found to influence behaviour⁶⁹ to use technology, while behavioural intention and facilitating conditions) determine technology use. UTUAT posits that individual's behavioural intention and use of IT is determined by six functional related factors as:

- i. Performance Expectancy (PE)
- ii. Effort Expectancy (EE)
- iii. Social Influence (SI)
- iv. Facilitating Conditions (FC)
- v. Attitude (A)
- vi. Behavioural Intention (BI)

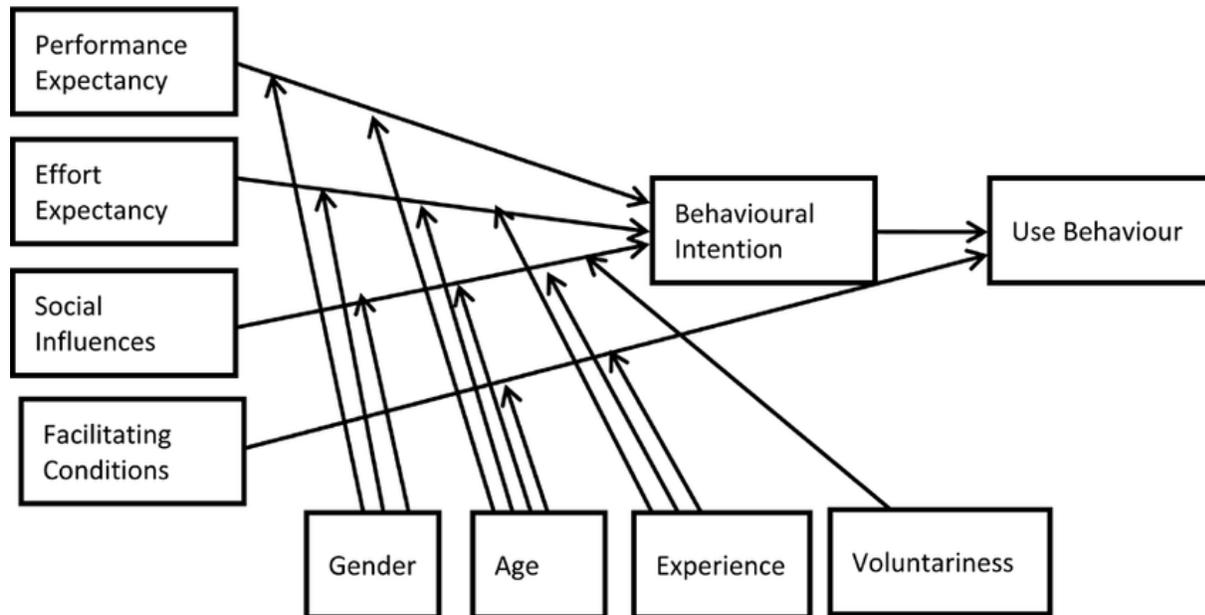


Figure 1. 1: Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) based on Venkatesh, et al (2003)

- i. **Performance expectancy:** is defined as the degree to which an individual believes that using the technology in an information system will help him or her to attain gains in job performance (Venkatesh et al., 2003).
- ii. **Effort expectancy:** is defined as the degree of ease associated with the use of technology in an information system (Venkatesh et al., 2003).
- iii. **Social influence:** is defined as the degree to which an individual perceives the important and believe that he or she should use the technology in an information system (Venkatesh et al., 2003)
- iv. **Facilitating conditions:** are defined as the degree to which an individual believes that an organizational and technical infrastructure exists to support the use of technology in an information system (Venkatesh et al., 2003).
- v. **Attitude:** defined as an individual's positive or negative feelings about performing and the use of technology within the information system environment (Davis, Finsight, and Trampedach, (2016)
- vi. **Behavioural intention:** is defined as a measure of the strength of one's intention to perform a specific task with the technology within an information system (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975).

However, considering the strength of the theory, for the fast sixteen years, there has been substantial empirical studies in favour of UTAUT such as Curtis, Crymble, Deigh, and Plano, (2010), adopted the theory to study the adoption of social media by 409 United States non-profit organizations. UTAUT had not been previously

A PUBLICATION of the Department of Science Education, Al-Hikmah University, Ilorin, Nigeria applied to the use of social media in public relations. They found that organizations with defined public relations departments are more likely to adopt social media technologies and use them to achieve their organizational goals. Women considered social media to be beneficial, and men exhibited more confidence in actively utilizing social media. Verhoeven, Merrill, Nyanga, and Schepers (2010) employed UTAUT to study computer use frequency in 714 university freshmen in Belgium and found that UTAUT was also useful in explaining varying frequencies of computer use and differences in information and communication technology skills in secondary school and in the university. Eckhardt, Laumer, Coen, and Weitzel (2009), were applied UTAUT to study social influence of workplace referent groups (superiors, colleagues) on intention to adopt technology in 152 German companies and found significant impact of social influence from the workplace, referents on information technology adoption. Despite the theory attribute of been applied in the conduct of previous studies, Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) has been widely criticized. Bagozzi (2007) critiqued the model and its subsequent extensions, stating “UTAUT is a well-meaning and thoughtful presentation,” but that it presents a model with 41 independent variables for predicting intentions and at least 8 independent variables for predicting behaviour,” and that it contributed to the study of technology adoption “reaching a stage of chaos.” He proposed instead a unified theory that coheres the “many splinters of knowledge” to explain decision making. On the other hand. Van Rosenberg (2009) also criticized the UTAUT as being less parsimonious than the previous Technology Acceptance Model and TAM2 because its assumptions can only achieved when moderating key relationships with up to four variables. They also called the grouping and labelling of items and constructs problematic because a variety of disparate items were combined to reflect a single psychometric construct.

Base on the reviewed literature and critical consideration of the information technology-based used and adoption models, the researcher used the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) six main constructs, with additional variables found in the reviewed of literature on the application and use of social networking sites for promoting the use of archival resources that include: awareness of social networking sites, application of social networking sites, attitude towards social networking sites, types of social networking sites, demographic variables and factors facilitating the use of social networking sites Venkatesh et-al (2003). Therefore, application and use of social networking sites are influenced by Performance Expectancy, Effort Expectancy, Social Influence Facilitating Conditions, Attitude, Behavioural Intention, awareness, attitude, factors facilitating the use of social networking sites and application and use as depicted in Fig. 2 below:

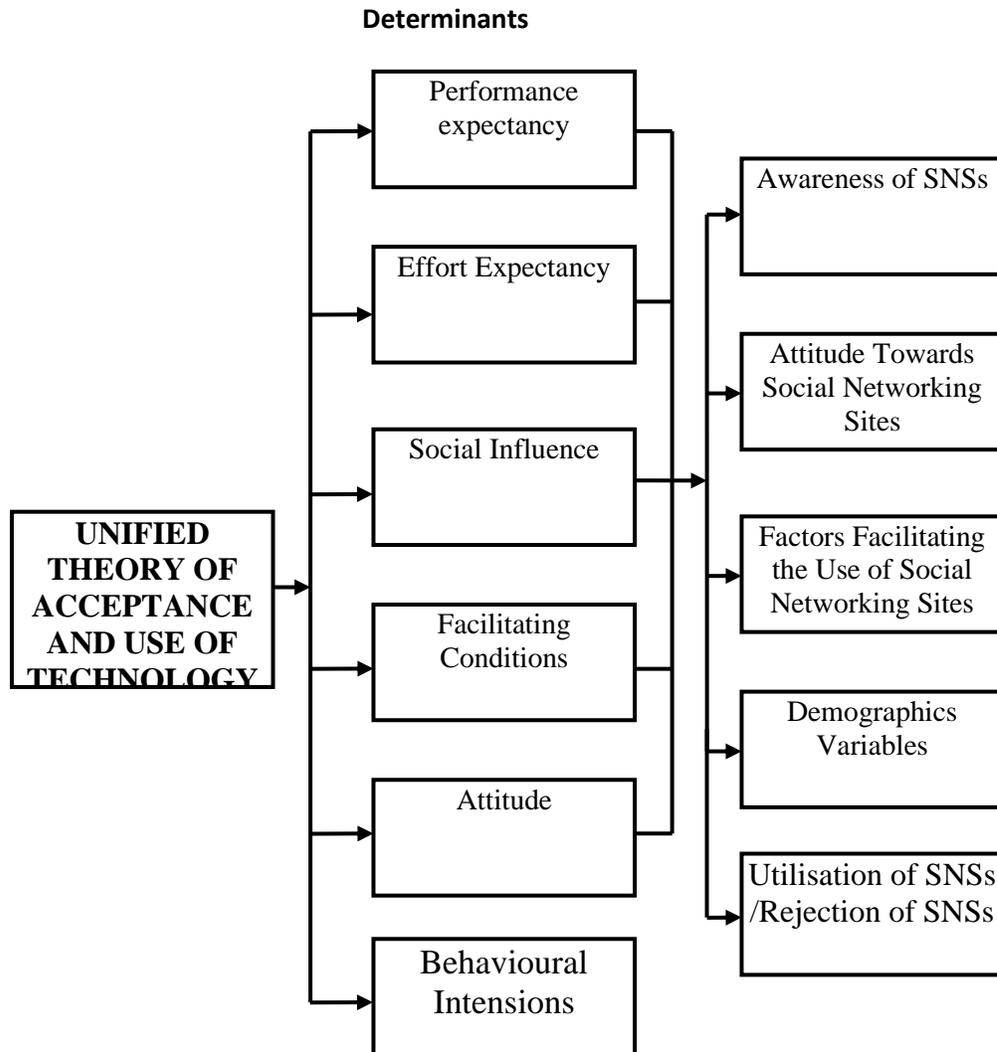


Fig 2.1: Proposed Conceptual Framework for the Utilisation of Social Networking sites for promoting the use of archival resources in the National Archives of Nigeria.

Performance expectancy: This component can translate as the acquisition of IT skills among archivists is a pre-requisite for the application and use of technology in archival institutions. This denotes that the utilization of the platforms in archives can enhance the performance and professional commitment of archivists in the cause of discharging their professionalism. Also, effective utilisation of the platforms by an IT skilled archive personnel could lead to promoting the use of archival resources and will help archivists to attain job performance and actualizing the goals of archival institutions.

The conceptual framework (CF) for the application of social networking sites has outlined the variable of this study and how they would be used to guide archival institutions towards the adoption of new technology for better performance. The framework indicates that a functional relationship exists among the variables that formed the components of the study. The framework is applied into two segments the first segments are the functionally related constructs through which and organization can pass through when applying the use of new technology. The second segment is made up of the functionally related components for the utilisation of social networking sites. A detail of each component is provided below:

1. **Effort expectancy:** Effort expectancy can influence the archival institutions to utilise social networking sites for promoting the use of archival resources. In the context of this study, this denotes that utilization of social networking sites in archives will ease the work and activities of archive personnel, and reduce to a reasonable extent the manual efforts employed by archivists in the services of archival institutions.
2. **Social influence:** Social influence in the context of this study, denotes that, with the changing nature of human communication influenced by the technological application and use in all spheres of human endeavour. Archival institutions have no alternative but to respond to the changing nature of human communication system, by integrating the use of new IT applications in the services of archival institutions. This also translates into user perceptions and recognizing the importance of social networking sites in the context of archival institutions. Going by the theoretical assumption of this component, the performance of archival institutions can be enhanced when archive personnel acquire IT skills and utilise the appropriate platforms for integration in the archival services for increasing the visibility and promoting the use of archival resources.
3. **Facilitating conditions:** Facilitating conditions in this context refer to the acceptance and use of technology depends solely on the organizational⁷³ readiness to adopt the use of technology by creating enabling environment and providing basic infrastructures to facilitate the use of the intended IT-oriented project. In the context of this study, utilisation of social networking sites in archives is possible only with the key stakeholders believes (government and directors of archival institutions) and acceptance of the technology in archival management as well as their readiness for IT integration through provision of adequate infrastructures and equipment required for the successful take-up of the system. Training and re-training of archive personnel to acquire relevant IT skills, knowledge as well as on the potentials of the new technology are also other factors that can facilitate the creation of an enabling environment for effective utilization of social networking sites for promoting the use of archival resources.
4. **Attitude:** This denotes that attitude of the actors (archivists and users of archival resources) involved in the practical application and use of the technology is the principal determinant of the success or otherwise associated with the utilisation of the technology. In the context of this study, the attitude and

perception of archive personnel whether negative or positive towards the utilization of social networking sites in archival operations is the determinant factor for the successful adoption of the technology in archives. As reflects in the literature review, negative attitude of archivists towards social networking sites could lead to negative behaviours and rejection of the technology which resulted to none application and utilization of social networking sites in archival operations. On the other angle, positive attitude of archivists towards the social networking sites can lead to the acceptance of the technology, which in essence can result to the application and utilisation of the platforms for promoting the use of archival resources.

5. **Behavioural intention:** This component translates the functional relationship exist between the positive attitude and behaviour. In the context of this study, it refers to the degree of acceptance of social networking sites and the archive personnel strong intention and readiness to utilise the appropriate social networking sites in the services of archival institutions.
6. **Awareness:** This refers to the knowledge of a particular innovation, idea or fact. In the context of this study, awareness means the knowledge of social networking sits for integration in archival operations. Awareness of social networking sites and their significance in promoting services provisions can help and prepare the archive personnel to accept and utilize the technology for enhancing the services and operations of archival institutions.
7. **Attitude:** This refers to the archivist's feelings and notions about the utilization of social networking sites in archives. In the context of this study, attitude implies archive personnel inclinations and perception of social networking sites as a tool that can enhance the performance of archival institutions and promote the use of archival resources. The attitude of archivists towards social networking sites is a key determinant factor to prepare the archivist to accept and utilise the use of the technology for promoting the use of archival resources.
8. **Factors Facilitating Use:** This refers to the set of conditions and enabling environment that can help towards the actualization of the effective use of social networking sites in archival operations and services. In this context, such facilitating factors include positive attitude of archive personnel, training and re-training of archive personnel, seminar and workshop attendance, availability of ICT equipment and reliable bandwidth for internet connectivity. This, in essence, will translate into effective utilization of social networking sites towards promoting the use of archival resources.
9. **Demographic variable:** This refers to the personal individual characteristics that influence the application and use of social networking sites by archivists. Such characteristics include gender, age, educational qualification, skills and professional working experience. In the context of this study, demographic factors are very essential and key players towards the realization of the application and use of social networking sites in archive.

10. **Utilisation:** This refers to the practical adoption and use of technology. In the context of this study, this implies acceptance and real utilisation of social networking sites in the archive with the basic aim of promoting the use of archival resources. This will consequently result to the actualization of the cardinal objectives behind the existence and set of archival institutions i.e to receive, assemble, process, preserve, conserve and provide access to non-current information resources in different forms and format with historical and research value.

Conclusion

The existence of archival institutions in Nigeria alongside the state enacted legislation available to support and ensure effective utilisation of archival resources in Nigeria. The emergence of social networking platforms forced significant challenges among archival personnel especially on how to apply the appropriate platforms towards promoting the use of archival holdings. The paper buttressed the need for application of social networking sites technology for enhancing the visibility and use of archival resources in Nigeria based on theoretical perspectives. The paper succeeded in proposing a conceptual framework which was constructed from the theoretical advocates of UTAUT. The proposed model therefore, demonstrates how effective utilization of archival resources can be achieved when following the theoretical assumption of UTAUT.

Suggestions

Based on the conceptual presentation of the proposed model constructs, archival personnel must make themselves familiar with different Social networking sites and applied the most platforms with features that can be employed to enhance the visibility and utilization of archival holdings. Equally, archival institutions as records creation and receiving agencies must be recognized and accepts the modern technological innovations for better performance and services of the institutions. Hence, the proposed conceptual framework can be used as guidelines for the adoption of social networking sites for improving the services of archival institutions and promoting the use of archival resources in the National Archive of Nigeria.

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