Use of social media in Library services: A case study of Universities in West Bengal.

Aditi Das[1] & Dr. Swapna Banerjee[2]
[1´2]University of Calcutta

Abstract: The goal of the present study is to provide standard and up to date services and conditions to researchers in order to improve their research productivity. This study will encourage University libraries to improve their services and to provide education to staffs in order to effectively support research activities. This is a case study approach based on the survey research method. Systematic evaluations have been carried out to understand the two parameters: (i) to know the social media based library services available in the University libraries and (ii) to know the need of the researchers of Physical Science department. Major findings revealed a lot of useful information and these were interpreted meaningfully. This study has thus proposed several social media based library services that can be introduced to the research scholars through the University library.
Keywords: Social media, Academic libraries, Facebook, Twitter, Information Technology.

1. Introduction

Social media opens the door for library for easy and convenient marketing of their products and services. Social media has become a very popular and powerful form of communication among the researchers. By exploiting Social media the library can give extra facility to reach their services and resources to their researchers, and offer them to communicate with the library. To satisfy the users many libraries are providing service through different social media like Facebooks, Twitter, and Podcast etc. during the last couple of year. Now a days libraries have their own Facebook page as well as they are also connected to other social networking & academic sites. Libraries connect with the users, professionals, organisations, classes, and others using the Social media /Social networking sites / web 2.0.

In University, these services are very much needed, as an enormous amount of users of these institutes are researchers. They always need special attention and

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services as their requirements are special and unique. Different types of social media based library services are discussed which are very much needed in this electronic era.

2. Review of Literature

Alonge (2012) expressed their views that the arrival of social media has shifted social and communication pattern of our society and various aspect of the library services directly change by using these products.

Jadhav (2014) described that the Uses of Facebook and Twitter are very popular and integral part of everyday communication in India.

Gupta et al. (2014) opined that to promote the library services and highlights the resources, patrons use of social media has increased in Academic Libraries.

Akeriwa et al. (2015) studied that use of social media applications and mobile devices are the two latest technologies that academic libraries are leveraging to enhance their overall service delivery. They also noted some of the frequently used social media tools include blogs, RSS feed, social bookmarking/ user tagging, wikis, social networking sites, podcasts, and instant messaging. Mobile interfaces, mobile collections and databases, Google books, mobile reference services, mobile instruction and mobile tour of the library etc. are providing easy dissemination of information among the users.

Kumar, Chegoni Ravi (2015) in his paper "Social networks impact on academic libraries in technology era", discussed about the importance of technology in education. He also discussed about the different types of social media tools and their benefits on academic libraries.

3. Significance

This study aims to analyse how University libraries contribute to improve research performance. The goal is to provide magnificent services and conditions to researchers in order to improve their research productivity. This study may encourage University libraries to improve their social media based library services in order to effectively support research activities. Increasing the quality of University library services will contribute to improved research results and thus, will attract talented research, professors and students from all over the world.

4. Objectives

a. To find out the different social media based library services in the University libraries,

b. To identify researchers' need for social media based library services in the University libraries.

5. Scope of the Study

The scope of the present study is to assess the various types of social media based services provided through the selected University libraries of India like University of Burdwan (B.U.), University of Calcutta (C.U.), Jadavpur University (J.U.), University of Kalyani (K.U.), University of North Bengal

(N.B.U.), Vidyasagar University (V.U.) and Visva Bharati University (V.B.U.). The study focuses on the overall assessment of these libraries on the basis of 'librarian's response' and 'researcher's response' included in the questionnaire. An attempt has been made to identify the researcher's feedback towards their use of the libraries and their views on library services. The study is limited to the research scholars of these Universities.

6. Limitations of the Study

The present study is limited to *full time research scholars* who avail the research facilities provided by the Universities, of the Departments concerned with **Physical Science.** Important and authentic reference sources like The New Encyclopedia Britannica, Mc Graw-Hill encyclopedia of Science & Technology, Funk & Wagnalls New Encyclopedia, Collins English Dictionary & Thesaurus, etc. describe *Physical Science*, which includes Physics, Chemistry, Geology and Astronomy. Therefore the data was collected from these Departments. The Central libraries were considered in this work, and not the Departmental libraries, since the ideal type of resources, services, the electronic environment were all present mostly in the Central libraries and not in the Departmental libraries.

7. Methodology

The study employed is a case study approach based on the survey research method. For the present study, the following research tools have been used for the collection of data:

- *Questionnaire*

  Two questionnaires (Appendices I & II) are designed to collect the data for the present study.

  Questionnaire - I for the librarians

Questionnaire - II for the research scholars;

- *Interview*

Informal interviews were conducted with both, librarians and researchers in order to understand their view and fill in the gaps in their responses, if any.

The study was based on two parameters: (i) to know the social media based library services available in the University libraries and (ii) to know the information need of the researchers by the researchers of Physical Science department.

Simple Random Sampling technique was used for the collection of data. Data collection for this study started on June 2022 and ended on November 2023. A total numbers of **348 responses** were collected from the researchers of these seven Universities.

8. Social media based library services

Different types of social media which helps in research work are-

8.1. Blog- Universities use Blogs to keep their researchers aware with the latest developments in the library. Blogs can be subscribed through RSS feeds. Blogger and Word Press are the examples of blog. Information on different notices, latest arrivals, current awareness services, user orientation programmes are provided through blogs.

8.2. Social bookmarking / user tagging- Universities use social bookmarking web sites to tag and develop online catalog of library resources. It helps researchers to organise and save links of online resources and websites. Delicious is an online social bookmarking service which store and share the large number of web bookmarks. Other notable bookmarking services are CiteUlike, Diigo, Google Reader, folkd, etc.

8.3. Wikis- The most recognized wiki is Wikipedia. A few other wiki services are wikia, wiki how, wiki dot, Wikimedia, wiki news, PB works, Appropedia and Library success etc. Wikis can be used in library for collaborative work, Publication of historical photos and information, and Building relation between librarian and user.

8.4. Face book- Universities maintain a Face book account which can frequently post messages, videos and photos related to library and various activities. It helps for marketing and sharing of information about their new arrivals and editions of books; promoting communication like Events, Library service, Resource, Teaching tool, courses etc.; visibility and interaction with users. Ask-A –Librarian service can be exploited by using it.

8.5. Podcasts- It consists of an episodic series of audio, video, digital radio, or PDF. Podcasting provides the researchers to play the recorded intellectual output online without any additional software and also to download for future use. It may be utilized for user orientation programme, marketing of library services, and audio book collections.

8.6. Twitter- Universities periodically post messages through library websites; share information on a particular subject or issue, and allow users to contribute to content. University tweets and re tweets about various library related topics: event, day celebration, new groups, meetings, new resource added, new recruitments, special collection etc.

8.7. Whatsapp- Whatsapp messenger application enables users to communicate with the library wherever and whenever they want to make use of the library services. It also provide a direct contact with the information specialist for asking any question and get an answer to it that helps them in performing scientific researches. Universities provide a wide array of services to interested users on Whatsapp through library such as Current Awareness Service (CAS), Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI), Reference service, Ask Librarian, User Discussion Forum, Document Reservation, Abstract Service, Acquisition Feedback, Reminders and notifications, Library instruction, Library News etc.

8.8. Linkedin- It is a professional networking site. It can be used by the librarians to create professional connections and to market library services among other library professionals spread all over the world and can also share their ideas and professional experiences. Librarians can also use this platform to

render specialized services such as Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI).

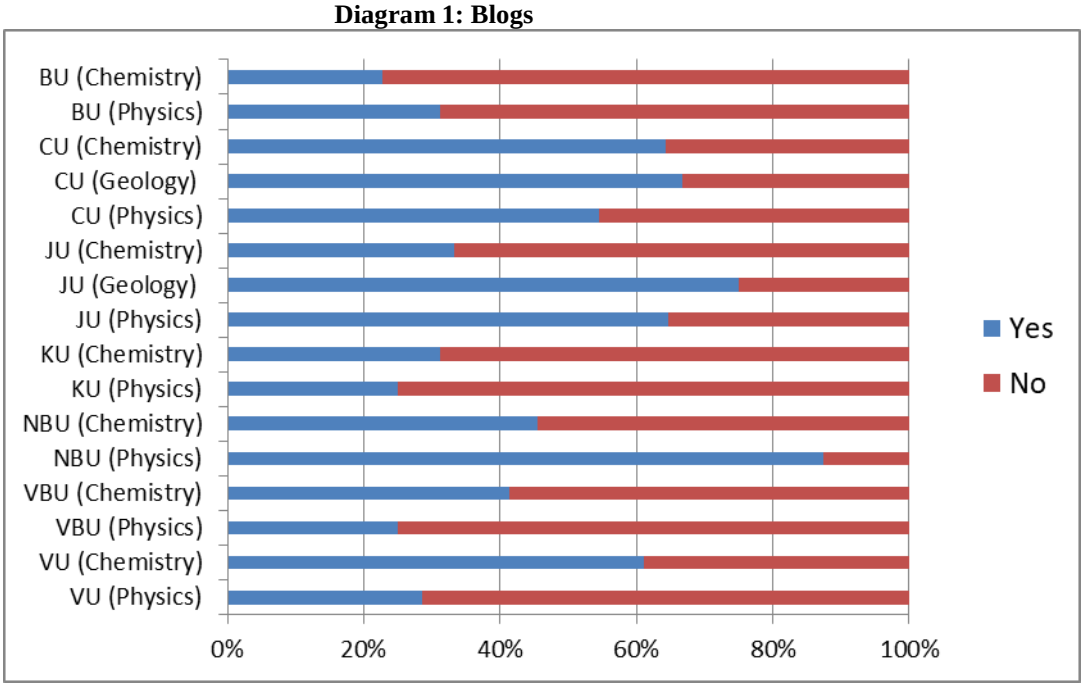
Now let us sum up the social media based library services in Universities in tabular form.

Table 1. Social media based library services in Universities

Services	**Burdwan**	**Calcutta**	**Jadavpur**	**Kalyani**	**North Bengal**	**Vidyasagar**	**Visva-Bharati**
Blogs	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Social bookmarking / user tagging	--	--	--	--	--	--	**Yes**
Wikis	--	--	--	--	--	--	**Yes**
Face book	**Yes**	--	--	**Yes**	--	--	**Yes**
Podcasts	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Twitter	--	--	--	**Yes**	--	--	--
Whatsapp	**Yes**	--	--	**Yes**	--	--	**Yes**
Linkedin	--	--	--	**Yes**	--	--	--

9. Need for Social media based library service

Diagram 1: Blogs

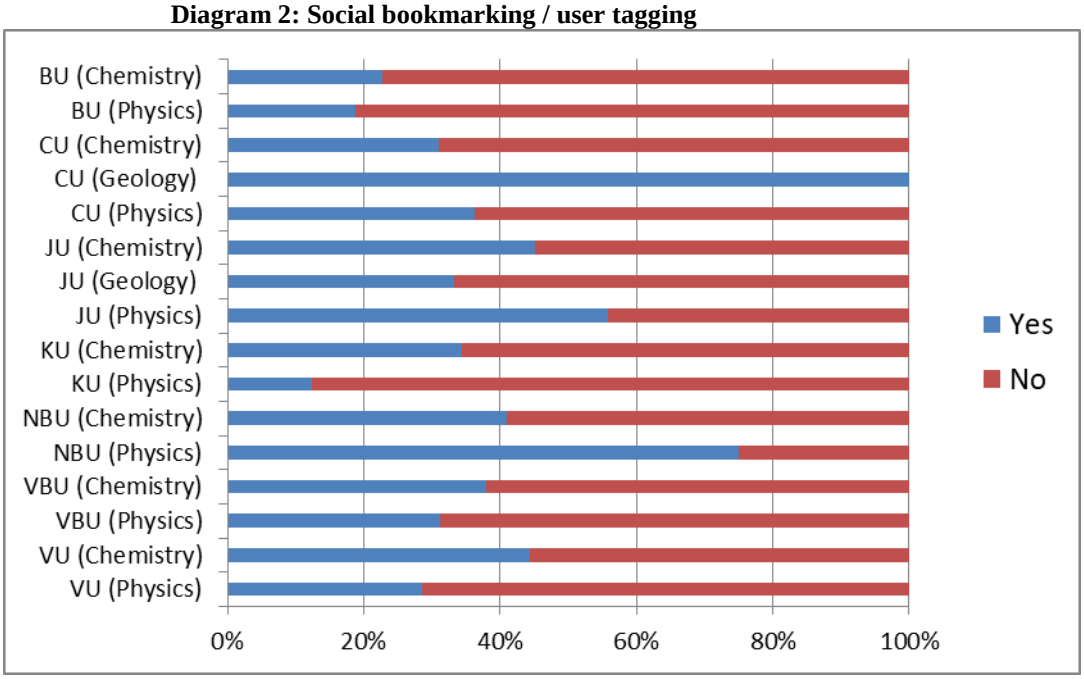


In diagram 1, the study population has been divided into two groups e.g. Yes and No. Out of these, (45.68%) respondents opted for Yes and (54.31%) respondents for No.

Maximum of respondents gave **positive (Yes) responses** for blogs, they are from NBU (Physics) (87.50%), followed by JU (Geology) (75%), CU (Geology) (66.66%), JU (Physics) (64.70%), CU (Chemistry) (64.28%), VU (Chemistry) (61.11%), CU (Physics) (54.54%), NBU (Chemistry) (45.45%), VBU (Chemistry) (41.37%), JU (Chemistry) (33.33%), BU (Physics) (31.25%), KU (Chemistry) (31.25%), VU (Physics) (28.57%), KU (Physics) (25%), VBU (Physics) (25%), and BU (Chemistry) (22.72%).

It is seen in **negative (No) responses**, majority of respondents are from BU (Chemistry) (77.27%), followed by KU (Physics) and VBU (Physics) (75%), VU (Physics) (71.42%), BU (Physics) and KU (Chemistry) (68.75%), JU (Chemistry) (66.66%), VBU (Chemistry) (58.62%), NBU (Chemistry) (54.54%), CU (Physics) (45.45%), VU (Chemistry) (38.88%), CU (Chemistry) (35.71%), JU (Physics) (35.29%), CU (Geology) (33.33%), JU (Geology) (25%), and NBU (Physics) (12.50%).

Diagram 2: Social bookmarking / user tagging



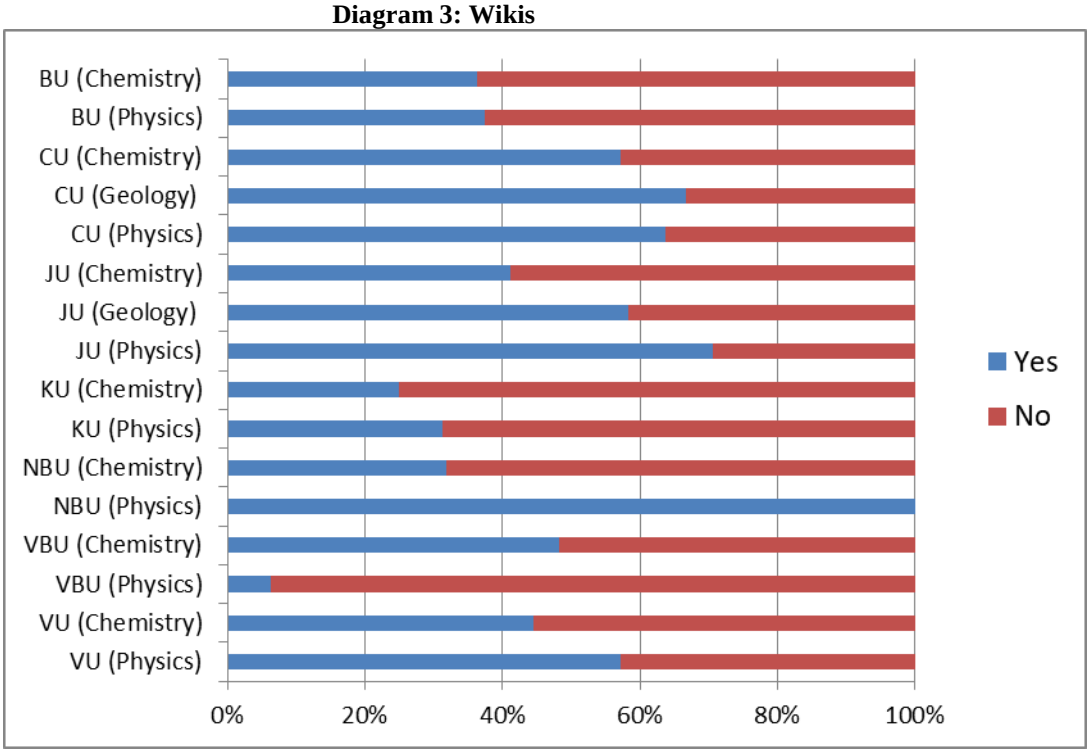
In diagram 2, the study population has been divided into two groups e.g. Yes and No. Out of these, (39.36%) respondents opted for Yes and (60.63%) respondents for No.

Respondents who gave **positive (Yes) responses**, are from CU (Geology) (100%), followed by NBU (Physics) (75%), JU (Physics) (55.88%), JU (Chemistry) (45.09%), VU (Chemistry) (44.44%), NBU (Chemistry) (40.90%),

VBU (Chemistry) (37.93%), CU (Physics) (36.36%), KU (Chemistry) (34.37%), JU (Geology) (33.33%), VBU (Physics) (31.25%), CU (Chemistry) (30.95%), VU (Physics) (28.57%), BU (Chemistry) (22.72%), BU (Physics) (18.75%), and KU (Physics) (12.50%).

Among **negative (No) responses**, majority of respondents are from KU (Physics) (87.50%), followed by BU (Physics) (81.25%), BU (Chemistry) (77.27%), VU (Physics) (71.42%), CU (Chemistry) (69.04%), VBU (Physics) (68.75%), JU (Geology) (66.66%), KU (Chemistry) (65.62%), CU (Physics) (63.63%), VBU (Chemistry) (62.06%), NBU (Chemistry) (59.09%), VU (Chemistry) (55.55%), JU (Chemistry) (54.90%), JU (Physics) (44.11%), and NBU (Physics) (25%).

Diagram 3: Wikis

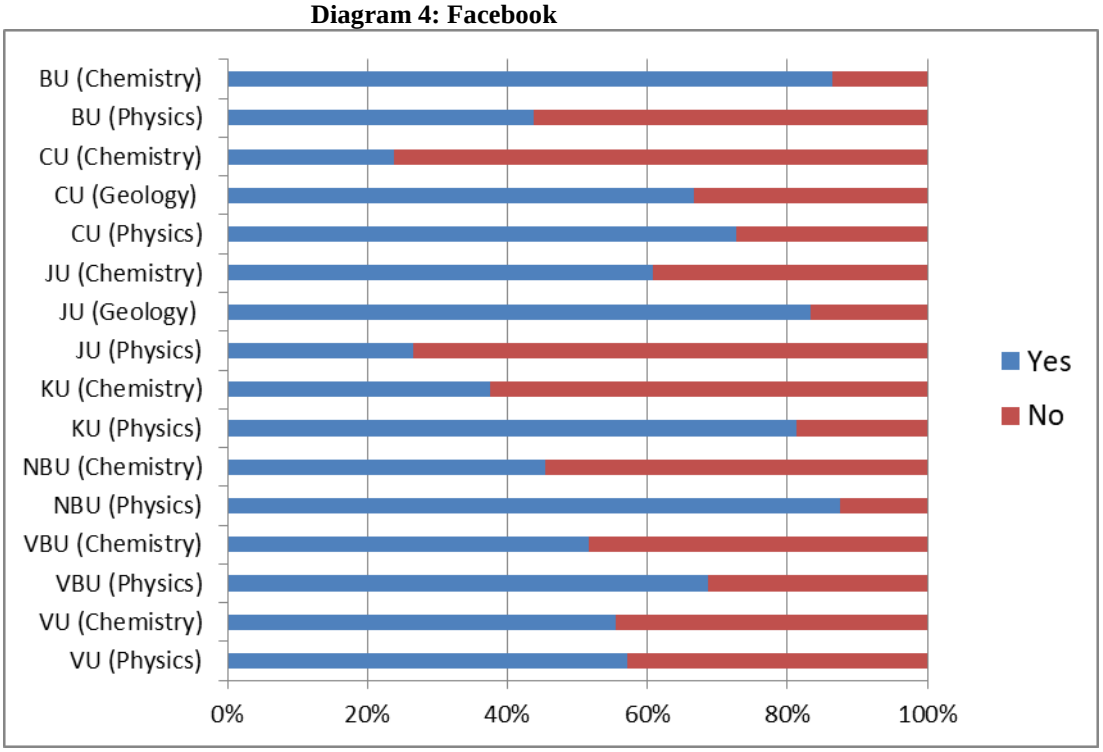


In diagram 3, the study population has been divided into two groups e.g. Yes and No. Out of these, (45.97%) respondents opted for Yes and (54.02%) respondents for No.

Majority of respondents gave **positive (Yes) responses** for wikis, they are from NBU (Physics) (100%), followed by JU (Physics) (70.58%), CU (Geology) (66.66%), CU (Physics) (63.63%), JU (Geology) (58.33%), CU (Chemistry) and VU (Physics) (57.14%), VBU (Chemistry) (48.27%), VU (Chemistry) (44.44%), JU (Chemistry) (41.17%), BU (Physics) (37.50%), BU (Chemistry)

(36.36%), NBU (Chemistry) (31.81%), KU (Physics) (31.25%), KU (Chemistry) (25%), and VBU (Physics) (6.25%).
If we consider the **negative (No) responses**, maximum respondents are from VBU (Physics) (93.75%), followed by KU (Chemistry) (75%), KU (Physics) (68.75%), NBU (Chemistry) (68.18%), BU (Chemistry) (63.63%), BU (Physics) (62.50%), JU (Chemistry) (58.82%), VU (Chemistry) (55.55%), VBU (Chemistry) (51.72%), CU (Chemistry) and VU (Physics) (42.85%), JU (Geology) (41.66%), CU (Physics) (36.36%), CU (Geology) (33.33%), and JU (Physics) (29.41%).

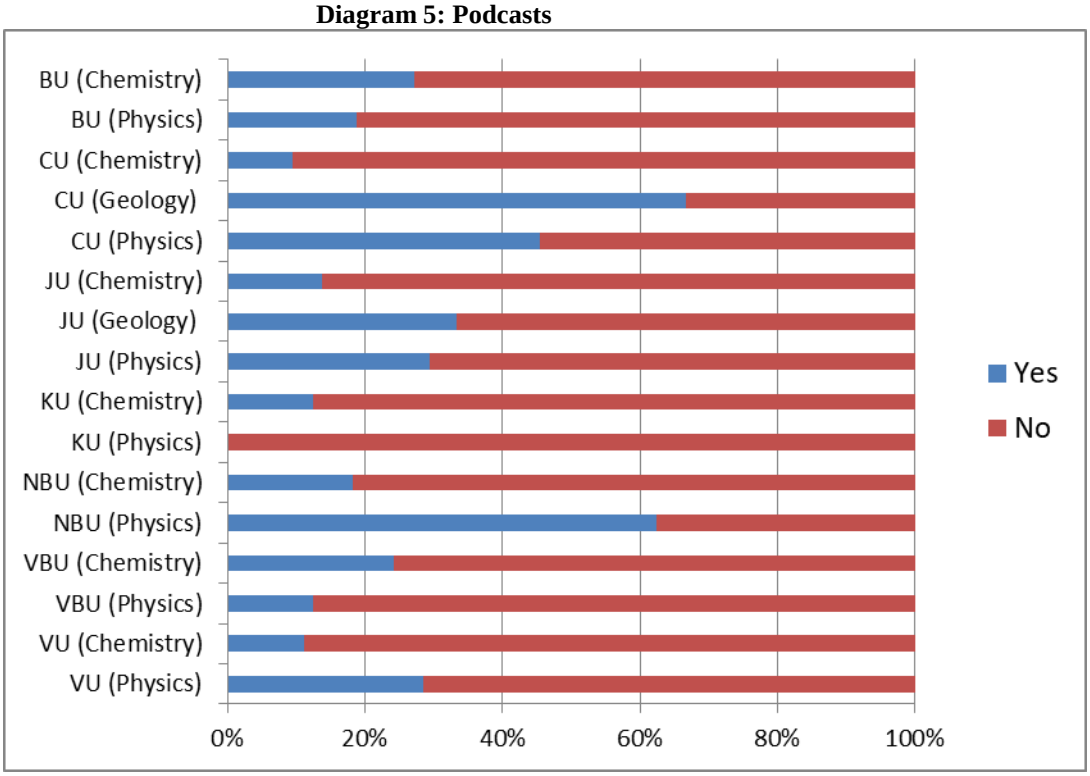
Diagram 4: Facebook



In diagram 4, the study population has been divided into two groups e.g. Yes and No. Out of these, (52.87%) respondents opted for Yes and (47.12%) respondents for No.
Respondents who gave **positive (Yes) feedback**, are from NBU (Physics) (87.50%), followed by BU (Chemistry) (86.36%), JU (Geology) (83.33%), KU (Physics) (81.25%), CU (Physics) (72.72%), VBU (Physics) (68.75%), CU (Geology) (66.66%), JU (Chemistry) (60.78%), VU (Physics) (57.14%), VU (Chemistry) (55.55%), VBU (Chemistry) (51.72%), NBU (Chemistry) (45.45%), BU (Physics) (43.75%), KU (Chemistry) (37.50%), JU (Physics) (26.47%), and CU (Chemistry) (23.80%).

Among **negative (No) responses**, majority of respondents are from CU (Chemistry) (76.19%), followed by JU (Physics) (73.52%), KU (Chemistry) (62.50%), BU (Physics) (56.25%), NBU (Chemistry) (54.54%), VBU (Chemistry) (48.27%), VU (Chemistry) (44.44%), VU (Physics) (42.85%), JU (Chemistry) (39.21%), CU (Geology) (33.33%), VBU (Physics) (31.25%), CU (Physics) (27.27%), KU (Physics) (18.75%), JU (Geology) (16.66%), BU (Chemistry) (13.63%), and NBU (Physics) (12.50%).

Diagram 5: Podcasts



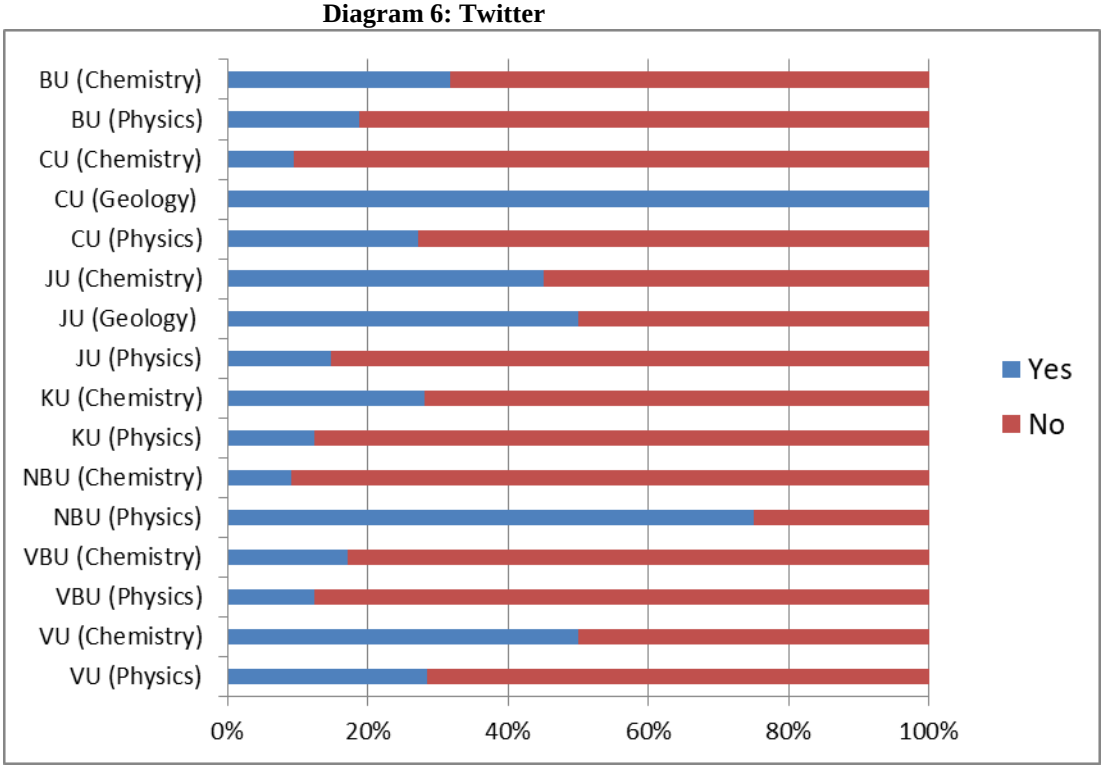
In diagram 5, the study population has been divided into two groups e.g. Yes and No. Out of these, (20.97%) respondents opted for Yes and (79.02%) respondents for No.

Maximum of respondents gave **positive (Yes) responses**, they are from CU (Geology) (66.66%), followed by NBU (Physics) (62.50%), CU (Physics) (45.45%), JU (Geology) (33.33%), JU (Physics) (29.41%), VU (Physics) (28.57%), BU (Chemistry) (27.27%), VBU (Chemistry) (24.13%), BU (Physics) (18.75%), NBU (Chemistry) (18.18%), JU (Chemistry) (13.72%), KU (Chemistry) and VBU (Physics) (12.50%), VU (Chemistry) (11.11%), and CU (Chemistry) (9.52%).

If we study the **negative (No) responses**, it is seen that majority of respondents are from KU (Physics) (100%), followed by CU (Chemistry) (90.47%), VU

(Chemistry) (88.88%), KU (Chemistry) and VBU (Physics) (87.50%), JU (Chemistry) (86.27%), NBU (Chemistry) (81.81%), BU (Physics) (81.25%), VBU (Chemistry) (75.86%), BU (Chemistry) (72.72%), VU (Physics) (71.42%), JU (Physics) (70.58%), JU (Geology) (66.66%), CU (Physics) (54.54%), NBU (Physics) (37.50%), and CU (Geology) (33.33%).

Diagram 6: Twitter



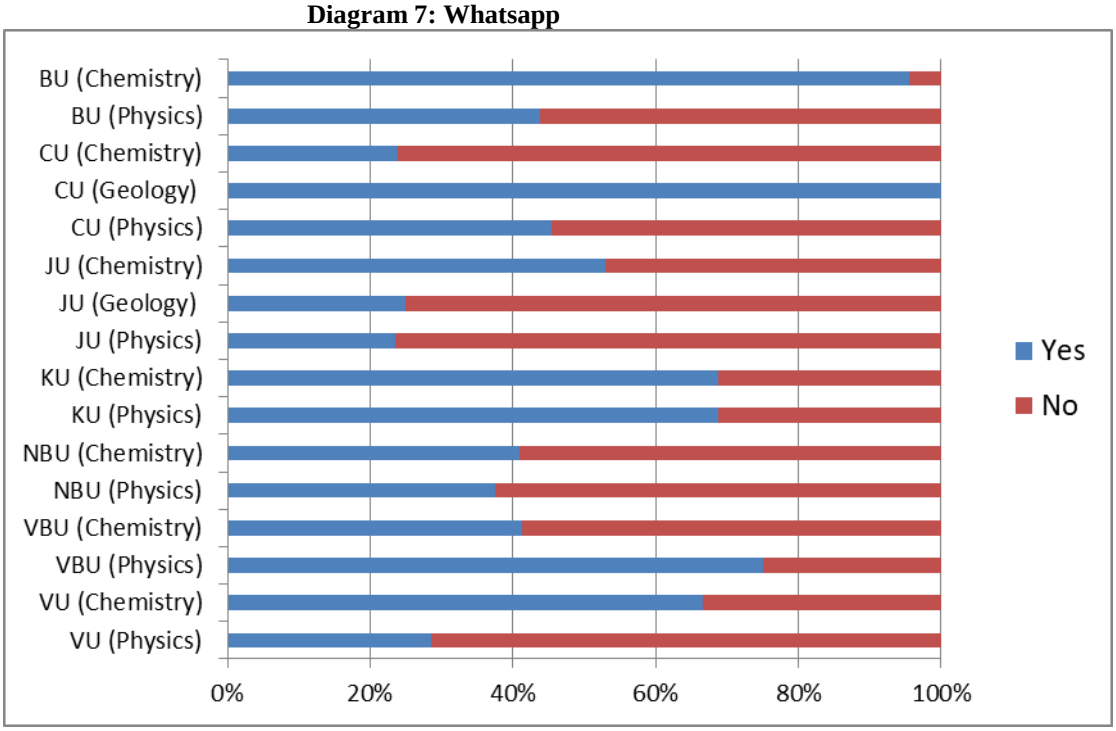
In diagram 6, the study population has been divided into two groups e.g. Yes and No. Out of these, (28.73%) respondents opted for Yes and (71.26%) respondents for No.

Respondents who gave **positive (Yes) responses** for twitter, maximum are from CU (Geology) (100%), followed by NBU (Physics) (75%), JU (Geology) and VU (Chemistry) (50%), JU (Chemistry) (45.09%), are BU (Chemistry) (31.81%), VU (Physics) (28.57%), KU (Chemistry) (28.12%), CU (Physics) (27.27%), BU (Physics) (18.75%), VBU (Chemistry) (17.24%), JU (Physics) (14.70%), KU (Physics) and VBU (Physics) (12.50%), CU (Chemistry) (9.52%), and NBU (Chemistry) (9.09%).

Respondents who gave **negative (No) responses**, are from NBU (Chemistry) (90.90%), followed by CU (Chemistry) (90.47%), KU (Physics) and VBU (Physics) (87.50%), JU (Physics) (85.29%), VBU (Chemistry) (82.75%), BU (Physics) (81.25%), CU (Physics) (72.72%), KU (Chemistry) (71.87%), VU

(Physics) (71.42%), BU (Chemistry) (68.18%), JU (Chemistry) (54.90%), JU (Geology) and VU (Chemistry) (50%), and NBU (Physics) (25%).

Diagram 7: Whatsapp

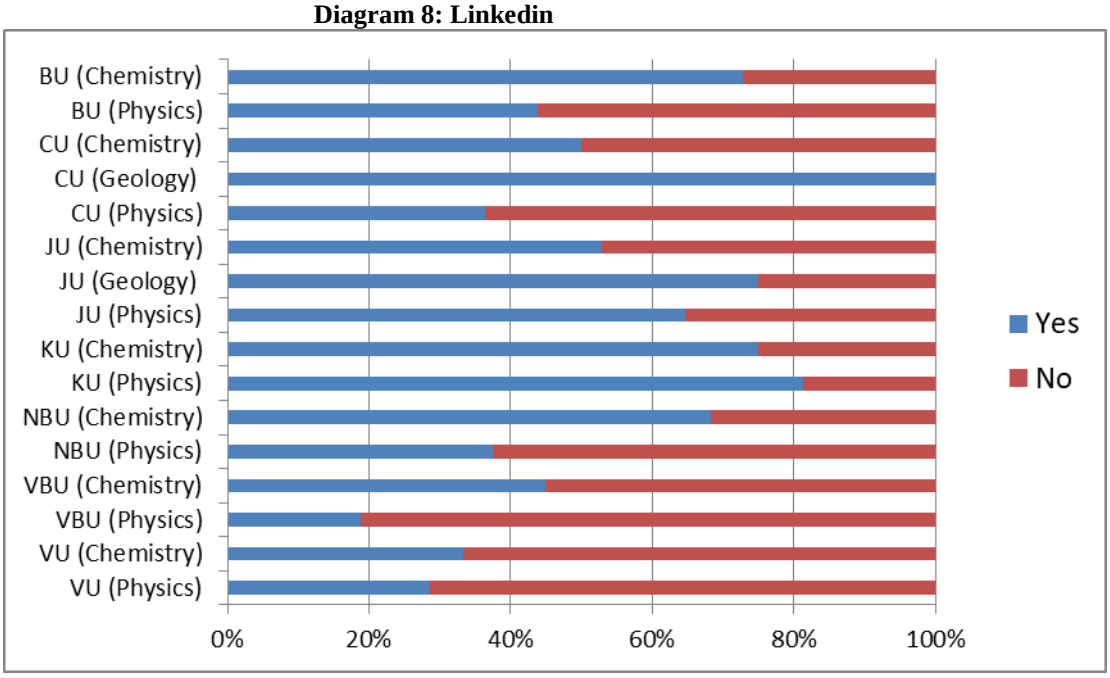


In diagram 7, the study population has been divided into two groups e.g. Yes and No. Out of these, (50.57%) respondents opted for Yes and (49.42%) respondents for No.

If we analyse the responses of **positive (Yes) feedback**, respondents of CU (Geology) (100%), followed by BU (Chemistry) (95.45%), VBU (Physics) (75%), KU (Chemistry) and KU (Physics) (68.75%), VU (Chemistry) (66.66%), JU (Chemistry) (52.94%), CU (Physics) (45.45%), BU (Physics) (43.75%), VBU (Chemistry) (41.37%), NBU (Chemistry) (40.90%), NBU (Physics) (37.50%), VU (Physics) (28.57%), JU (Geology) (25%), CU (Chemistry) (23.80%), and JU (Physics) (23.52%) give their opinion.

It is seen in **negative (No) responses**, majority of respondents are from JU (Physics) (76.47%), followed by CU (Chemistry) (76.19%), JU (Geology) (75%), VU (Physics) (71.42%), NBU (Physics) (62.50%), NBU (Chemistry) (59.09%), VBU (Chemistry) (58.62%), BU (Physics) (56.25%), CU (Physics) (54.54%), JU (Chemistry) (47.05%), VU (Chemistry) (33.33%), KU (Chemistry) and KU (Physics) (31.25%), VBU (Physics) (25%), and BU (Chemistry) (4.54%).

Diagram 8: Linkedin



In diagram 8, the study population has been divided into two groups e.g. Yes and No. Out of these, (56.60%) respondents opted for Yes and (43.39%) respondents for No.

Maximum of respondents gave **positive (Yes) responses** for Linkedin, they are from CU (Geology) (100%), followed by KU (Physics) (81.25%), JU (Geology) and KU (Chemistry) (75%), BU (Chemistry) (72.72%), NBU (Chemistry) (68.18%), JU (Physics) (64.70%), JU (Chemistry) (52.94%), CU (Chemistry) (50%), VBU (Chemistry) (44.82%), BU (Physics) (43.75%), NBU (Physics) (37.50%), CU (Physics) (36.36%), VU (Chemistry) (33.33%), VU (Physics) (28.57%), and VBU (Physics) (18.75%).

Among the **negative (No) responses**, majority of respondents are from VBU (Physics) (81.25%), followed by VU (Physics) (71.42%), VU (Chemistry) (66.66%), CU (Physics) (63.63%), NBU (Physics) (62.50%), BU (Physics) (56.25%), VBU (Chemistry) (55.17%), CU (Chemistry) (50%), JU (Chemistry) (47.05%), JU (Physics) (35.29%), NBU (Chemistry) (31.81%), BU (Chemistry) (27.27%), JU (Geology) and KU (Chemistry) (25%), and KU (Physics) (18.75%).

10. Discussion

In this study, the services need to be provided to the researchers are evaluated. It has been seen that V.B.U. is best in providing social media based services, whereas C.U., J.U., N.B.U. and V.U. does not has any provision of this.

A major factor is the need for social media based library services in which Linkedin followed by Facebook, Whatsapp, Wikis, Blogs, Social bookmarking / user tagging, Twitter and Podcast are claimed as research scholars need according to their effectiveness. Linkedin is the most preferred and podcast is the least preferred social media based services. The need for social media based library services is highest in University of North Bengal, which follows Jadavpur University, University of Calcutta, University of Burdwan, University of Kalyani, Vidyasagar University and Visva Bharati University.

11. Conclusion

The usage of the library resources is largely influenced by the social media based services provided to the researchers which will motivate them to visit the library and access the available resources. In the field of library science and library it is one of the most important and powerful tool for disseminating the library services. Understanding the needs of the library users is vital in determining the type of services to be provided to the users so that they are satisfied, and thereby improve their knowledge and information levels. Academic librarians are supposed to understand the context for service development, and then build up the infrastructure for social media based library services, and improve their knowledge and technical skills, so as to make overall plans and conduct systematic services around the research activities of researchers.

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