

## **Asynchronous digital tools and continuing professional development of librarians in tertiary institutions in South–South, Nigeria**

<sup>1</sup>Faith Sylvester Orim, *PhD*, <sup>2</sup>Moses Agba Undie, <sup>3</sup>Joseph Ungwugwaye Igligli, *PhD*  
Department of Library and Information Science, University of Calabar, Calabar, Nigeria  
E-mail: <sup>1</sup>fateorim@unical.edu.ng, <sup>1</sup>fateorim@gmail.com; <sup>2</sup>undiemoses@unical.edu.ng,  
<sup>2</sup>mosgba4life@yahoo.com; <sup>3</sup>josephIgligli@yahoo.com

### **Abstract**

The study was carried out to examine asynchronous digital tools and continuing professional development of librarians in tertiary institutions in South-South, Nigeria. To achieve this purpose, two research questions and two hypotheses were formulated for the study. The study adopted a correlational research design with stratified sampling and purposive technique was used to collect a sample of 300 respondents who are certified librarians from universities, polytechnics, and colleges of education in South-South geopolitical zone, Nigeria. A 40-item questionnaire instrument titled ‘Asynchronous digital tool and continuing professional development Questionnaire (ADTCPDQ)’ validated, pilot tested and found suitable was applied for gatherings of data. The data were collected by the researcher with some research assistant. Data collected were analyzed using Pearson product moment correlation on statistics. The result showed that use of emails and participation in new group significantly contributes to continuing professional development of librarians. Based on the findings, it was recommended that tertiary institutions in the south south of Nigeria should provide array of digital communication tools and infrastructural facilities that can enable librarians and other professionals to look-up or log-in to access information desired for learning and professional development and that there is need for continual awareness creation among librarians in tertiary institutions about the availability and viability of these online tools to explore and use for their professional development and practice.

**Keyword:** Asynchronous, digital tools, continuing professional development, librarians, tertiary institutions, South–South, Nigeria

### **Introduction**

In a rapidly changing library and information service society such as we have it today, continuing professional development is not only a desirable activity, but also one that librarians must pursue to remain competent and productive work force. The aim is to raise the skills level, increase versatility and adaptability of librarians to the ever-changing work tools, techniques, processes for more result-oriented task accomplishment. In library and information service setting, the nature of modern digital infrastructures, protocols, multi-media equipment, variety of resources, platforms, and the mechanism to access them, has necessitated continuing professional development even more than before, so that librarians can keep pace with changes in the service demand. Hence, tertiary institutions aptly require well trained librarians to perform task with dexterity and high quality assurance.

The skills, abilities, and competences of librarians lie more on continuing

professional development that produces cumulative experience acquired within the span of their work process. For this reason, libraries all over the world are purposely spurring staff continuous training to instill some levels of competencies that can meet the needs of the digital library environment. For a long time, continuing professional development has become a veritable feature of all time learning, training, and advancement of skills in producing a formidable work team. This is because librarians work has been transformed from that of traditional keepers of books to that of descriptors, metadata creators, documentaries, archiving, and retrieval moguls. Therefore, librarians need continuing professional development training to function effectively.

Unfortunately, it has been observed that over the years, most librarians do not utilize these media platforms effectively for their professional growth though it is considered very desirable for keeping up to date with changes in work tools,

communication, skills development activities. Most librarians rather prefer the synchronous method of development which is limited to the age long in-house training, mentoring, seminar, workshop, conferences and occasional on-site training. Most apparently, the reliance of librarians on this form of professional development has not really helped a good number of them to acquire the skills, knowledge and practical routines needed to make them effective and competent in the job. All these methods of continuing education are place, time and educator presence dependent, with obvious challenges. The challenges are in form of financial deficit, in which institutions and organization often fail to provide support for in-service training of librarians in a scale and magnitude that should cover all qualified staff who desire for such programmes. In addition, the cost of participating in conferences, seminars, workshop continues to rise astronomically and make it difficult for not only librarians, but other professionals to sponsor themselves to professional development trainings. Moreover, the fear of personal risk to travel long distances to participate in professional training programmes deters some librarians from self-development. The damning security situations in the country have added its toll and affect peoples disposition to continuing professional development. The overall effect is that most librarians still approach their job from the traditional perspective, and are not abreast with innovative and creative methods of performing their jobs which have adversely affected librarians learning achievement, skills acquisition, and exhibition of new knowledge in work places.

Efforts have been made to ensure that the problem of poor professionalism is addressed. For example, institutions have sponsored librarians training and development as part of institutional policy. Most tertiary institutions have provided study fellowships to staff including librarians to improve their professional status. Now some of the institutions are experiencing abject paucity of funds and have reduced the level of sponsorship to an extent that staff now bear

the pangs of self-sponsorship to conferences, seminars, workshops, in an age of publish or perish syndrome. For more than a decade now, the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) annually provides funding for staff in tertiary institutions to attend conferences, seminars, workshops, acquisition of higher degrees etc, for professional development under the staff development and training intervention. But this source of funding has declined greatly. Hence, it is not sufficient to benefit all eligible staff, but few. Self-sponsorship by librarians have nose-dived, ostensibly due to personal and institutional economic plunge. Many librarians are practically unable to sponsor themselves to professional development programmes. This has adversely affected their skills development process. Every year, the Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria (LRCN), Nigerian Library Association (NLA) through its nine sections organize conferences, seminars, technical workshops etc to update the knowledge and skills of librarians, but this is costly, place and time dependent without flexibility and affordability. In general, all the above efforts have yielded very insignificant result and have not brought concrete solution to the problem. However, the researcher is presuming that the utilization of asynchronous method of learning such as email, wikis, you tube, newsgroup, online forum, weblog, may contribute in enhancing continuing professional development. It is against this backdrop that this research effort is carried out to examine the likely relationship of asynchronous digital tools of continuing professional development among librarians in tertiary institutions in South-South, Nigeria.

Apparently, in today's professional development practices, asynchronous learning have emerged with digital tools. Fisher (2006) defined learning that occur at various locations and times, particularly lacking physical presence of an educator or instructor as asynchronous learning. This encompasses a large variety of learning teams and media, such as self-paced, distance learning, e-learning, online learning, computer based

learning and web based learning. Their tools of learning include Email, Weblog, News forum, YouTube, Newsgroup, Wikis, among others, that may enhance professional development.

Kask, Wood and Brett (2014) sums up advantages of asynchronous digital tools as: (i) Can incorporate a variety of media (eg LMS, Google wave, Elluminate). (ii) Avoidance of undesirable classroom behaviour (iii) Available anyplace (iii) Can incorporate a variety of media (eg LMS, Google wave, Elluminate). (iv) Contribution to discussion can be more evenly distributed (v) Can be used for one to one or one to many communications. (vi) More time for reflection. (vii) Documentation of collaborative process (eg Cloud Technology)(viii) More productive for students to share multiple perspectives. (ix) Available anytime.

In this case, continuing professional development learning could be delivered using these tools. Under such arrangement, learners need not converge at a certain place at certain times provided internet service is available. The learner can complete the curriculum at their own pace without group concern. This explains the reason why asynchronous learning a suitable option for professional librarians is who have busy schedules, because it allows a learner to take online courses to suit his own schedule. Here, online educators could provide learning materials, lectures, assignments, even exams that can be accessed anytime, any day and anyplace (eLearners.com,2016). The learners could learn the same material at their own times and locations. It involves the flexibility to maintain communication without meeting at the same time and at the same place. It involves digital communication tools where learners can post a message, read a message, or respond to a message anywhere around the world.

Mick and Middlebrook (2015) have given example of asynchronous digital tools to include: Email, newsgroup, online forum, weblog, wikis, YouTube, social media sites among others. Hence the tools covered in this

study includes Email is used for sending messages and data from one person to another by means of computers connected together through the internet. The messages are stored in the computer or cell phone until the receiver reads them irrespective of place and time. Because the same message can be disseminated to a number of recipients simultaneously, it enhances speedy delivery of learning materials from online educators to learners. Newsgroup is an internet-based discussion group where group members enjoy communication contacts premised on focused topics, events and learning for individual and group development. Here, group members can post, read, discuss and leave messages, reply to previous post which makes it a vibrant online tool for teaching and learning.

Online forum is a group-based platform in the internet for group exchange of ideas, knowledge and skills development based on their shared beliefs, passion, hobbies, lifestyle, professional learning's. Its support for self-directed, focused, all-inclusive activities provides an inspiring learning experience vital for continuing professional development. Weblogs is a website where people can write or present information or learning materials on any topic sequentially, and may combine text, videos, images, links to other blogs-sometimes for educational, instructional or entertainment purposes. It is a novel resource for transferring knowledge, skills, and hold vast educational potentials as online learning resource for continuing professional development.

Wikis is a database of pages in the internet where people can publish, edit, update, correct, share information, resources and knowledge. It could be a useful data bank for instructors to publish learning materials for learners to retrieve and use as resources. YouTube is a web-based visual services that transmit pictures, images, sound, and text materials for learning and social interaction that adds visual stimuli to learning and quite suitable for continuing professional development because of its persuasiveness and potency to capture the imagination of

learners, drive home facts of learning experience, especially in practical routines and skills oriented learning and development. It is hoped that the above tools could influence continuing professional development positively.

### **Theoretical framework**

*The theory of Andragogy by Malcolm S. Knowles (1984)*

Andragogy was propounded as a theory by an American educator Malcolm Knowles in 1984. The theory of andragogy states that there are differences between adult learners much more than teenage learners on the basis that adult learners are self-directed, having a reservoir of experience and being internally stimulated to learn subject matter that can be applied immediately to task at hand, that is, learning that relates to development task of a person's social role. Such learning, the theory explains, is relevancy oriented, goal oriented, problem solving, and social role related. Knowles justifies andragogy as the practical necessity of the education of adults.

Knowles considered Andragogy in line with emerging digital technology which facilitates the development and implementation of learning activities of adults. His concept of andragogy is premised on "the art and science of helping adults learn" which is constructed on two tripod stand (i) a commencement of learners who are self-determined and independent (ii) the vital part/function of the educator as a architect of learning other than presenter of content of the subject for total consumption.

The theory discusses adult learning in the light of the learner being self-determined and required to assume responsibility for any decision he takes. It avers that: (i) Adults required an explanation for the reason to learn something, (ii) individuals need to learn experientially, (iii) Approach in the individuals learning is an activity of problem solving, (iv) individuals learn rapidly when the title is of instant value. It explained that individual instruction should focus further on the process rather than content. It must use strategies involving practical exercises, case

studies, role-playing, simulation, self-evaluation, while instructors function more as facilitators rather than teachers.

Pullagurla (2014) explains that the ones that are cooperative and employ a problem-solving method which is the foundation of individual learning is the best environment for learning. In the circumstance the theory can be used to help e-learning professionals create more meaningful learning experiences for adult learners, as well as explain modern continuing professional development practices, and creating valid learning experiences for adult learners irrespective of professional learning.

The theory has direct relevance to this study because librarians are adults, and those of them who undergo continuing professional development education are adult learners. They are intrinsically stimulated to learn subject matter that they can promptly apply to solve their social roles or job-related problems. For that reason, librarians decide on what they want to learn and through which method based on their basic knowledge and experience, having known the value of what they want to learn, and what they want to use it for. They then take a decision of how to develop themselves, the skills they need to learn, and how they can apply the knowledge gained for their professional practice and career development goals.

*Ubiquitous learning theory by Mark Weiser (1993)*

The Ubiquitous Learning Theory propounded by Mark Weiser in 1993 states that "learning can occur at any place, anywhere, and at any time." Weiser coined the term from his idea of ubiquitous computing which he stated "as a model of human and computer interaction in which computer processing has been integrated fully into daily activities, and also integrated into objects with which we routinely interact with (in form of wearable hand-held, interactive) and resulting in the application of ubiquitous media for the delivery of education". The main context of Ubiquitous learning conveys a general model on acquisition of knowledge premised on the

fact that in the setting of real life activities, actual learning happens (Mikelloydtech, 2013) based on the use of hardware/software electronic platforms which are omnipresence. It is defined as the method of faultlessly incorporating computers to the physical world. Thus, Jones and Jo (2004) reports Ubiquitous learning to be both persistent and determined, enabling learners to pursue education amenably, quietly and faultlessly, removing physical constraints of traditional (education) learning, allowing for personalization and customization to learners needs.

The theory is important to this study on the basis that learning can occur anywhere, anyplace and anytime. It can be in the workplace, sport ground, or during a journey, be it morning, afternoon or night. For this reason, librarians have the flexibility of gaining new knowledge, acquire new skills, share ideas, exchange information and remain professionally competent through the flexibility of learning process. Therefore, ubiquitous learning can be seen to support continuing professional development of librarians and enhance their professional competence. It supports self-directed learning, learners' goal-setting and practical applicability to work roles of librarians.

### **Statements of the problem**

Overtime, it has been revealed that the degree of professional development among librarians in tertiary institutions of learning is very slow and poor. Librarians who are still tied to the traditional method of acquiring knowledge and skills through conferences, seminars and workshops for their professional development have complained about their desperation arising from inadequate coverage of the scope of their courses, inability to afford conference cost, the risk of travelling to distant places, personal security threat outside their environment, the time demanding nature of their job, the constraint of participating in training of general theme with multi-disciplinary dimensions that may not be directly or specifically tailored to their core practices. These constraints have dampened

their interest and pose serious challenge in the domain of librarians' professional development.

The effect of the above scenario is that librarians are inadvertently prevented from having access to the wealth of global knowledge and information bank relevant to their practice, leading to skills deficit, limited innovativeness, low level of creativity, less collaborative attitude required to sharpen their job commitment. Under the present method of continuing professional development, cross fertilization of ideas with international experts is elusive. This portrays the precarious situation most librarians are facing now.

Hence, the present continuing professional development arrangement has the defect of being time and place dependent, coupled with the constraint of teacher presence in any learning session. The general effect of this method of learning is slow pace of knowledge/skills acquisition that is manifesting in ineffective library services, and is not appropriate for a modern knowledge savvy library users. Efforts made by institutions and government agencies to help librarians grow professionally have produced less result, due to this inappropriate method of continuing professional development. With the current world of knowledge explosion and utilization of intellectual digital tools and platforms, there is dire need for librarians to apply virtual learning tools and platforms that can enhance their professional development for effective service delivery. For this reason, the researcher is worried whether the use of asynchronous digital tools could help librarians to develop professionally in the South-South, Nigeria.

### **Purpose of the study**

The purpose of this study was to examine the nature and extent of relationship between asynchronous digital tools and continuing professional development of librarians in tertiary institutions in South-South, Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to find out whether;

1. Use of e-mail relates with continuous development of professional librarians.
2. Participation in Newsgroup relates with continuous development of professional librarians.
- 3.

### **Research hypotheses**

The following hypotheses are tested study:

1. Use of e-mail has no significant contribution to continuing professional development of librarians.
2. Participation in newsgroups has no significant contribution to continuing professional development of librarians.

## Literature review

In a study carried out by Chanseawrassamee (2012) on utilization of social media platform and professional development program on Turkish Librarians. Survey research design was used for the study with a purposive method of sampling apply to select a total of 620 librarians across 4 districts. The study utilized a questionnaire used in collecting data from the respondents. The Pearson product moment correlation was apply in the data analysis. The outcome showed that there is no significant relationship between the use of emails on professional development. There was no significant relationship between wikis and staff development. However, online forum was found significant in enhancing staff professional development.

In another study on use of the internet for staff professional development: supports and inhibitors. This research was a survey research design with purposive method of sampling applies to used to obtain a sample of 400 librarians. The study utilized a structured questionnaire validated by librarians and experts in statistics and educational evaluation. Collection of data was analyzed using Pearson product correlation statistics. Result showed that there is a significant relationship between internet usage and professional development of staff. A deeper inspection showed that emailing, twitting, and what sapping has no significant relationship with staff professional development. However, news grouping and online forum was significantly related with staff professional development. It was recommended that staff should not just be encouraged to attend trainings in classroom settings but also use internet for knowledge acquisition and sharing.

E-mail has become one of the most vital means for online educators to reach out to their online learners including professional librarians (Evans, Martin & Poatsy, 2007). Because email can be sent from educators/teachers' computers anytime, anywhere, or any day, to any part of the world, and it arrives its destination within seconds, it makes the medium of

communication effectively suitable for delivery of learning materials to online learners and librarians too who have internet access. Secondly, since the same message can be routed to multiple recipients simultaneously, it facilitates reception of learning materials, instructions, and guidance by several persons at a time. Email as we know, can carry attachment of digital files which may be electronic documents, videos, music, files, photos, etc, as part of online lectures on librarians' continuing professional development (CPD). In the same vein, online learners can send reactions to their educators or teachers through the means of email attachments, thereby making exchange of communication possible with speed. Learners' responses or reactions may be in form of submission of term paper, test answers, or any form of course work. The ease of sending and receiving email communication even by technophobic professionals encourages inept users to benefit from the service in their learning exercises. Apparently, some users of email communications does so for the no or little cost implication, while achieving much with the service.

As Pandey (2010) notes, with email one can "send messages around the world more easily than sending someone down the block" free or with very low cost. He advised that in addition to sending text messages, one can also send word processing documents, spreadsheets, graphics, audio, video, and other electronic files in the course of delivering learning materials. Thus, this means of communication remains quite suitable for online learning programmes such as in continuing professional development (CPD). Email is a requisite digital communication tool that allows a learner to create folders that files the learning notes on a specified folder and which can be easily retrieved at a touch of few buttons. Pandey (2010) also explained that some email programmes affords opportunity of accommodating hyperlinks that can link someone (a learner) to a web page in such a way that on a click, the learner finds a link

that opens a web browser to link the page so directed Tsehabitsher (2015) report that the findings of the Radicate group (2015) genuine emails users sent around 2.5 billion emails per day and 74 billion emails in 2015.

In a study the author emphasized that continuing training and education are important for a creative organization, for malleability of the employee and fulfillment of jobs according to an open access resources for library continuing education and training by Bolin (2013). Organizations that regard learning refer to libraries of all kinds. The establishments of library for training and development for employees are expensive thus it is out of reach for smaller intuitions or libraries that are poorly funded. Irrespective of funding, libraries of all kinds can be of advantage from the widespread diversity of continuous and training education opportunities obtainable on the web as open access resources. These consist of journal articles, reports and white papers, online courses, videos, documentation, podcasts, and so on, from various diverse dependable sources. The study adopted a survey research design with a method of simple random sampling to select a total of 210 respondents. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire and the data was analyzed using independent t-test. The result showed that there was a significant difference in professional development among staff who utilize emails and online forum and those who do not. It was also found that a significant relationship exist between utilization of weblog and staff acquisition of professional information.

Newsgroup is an online discussion group hosted on the internet that enable association through chat sessions and electronic bulletin board system (jet NEXUS, 2016). There are numerous of internet-based newsgroups which discussions enclosed practically each possible subject of interest (Business dictionary.com, 2016). It is a area on the internet where individuals can talk about a specific phenomenon by leaving and reading message (jet NETXUS, 2016). Techtarget (2016) explains that Newsgroups

are grouped into hierarchies in subjects, with the first little letters of the newsgroup name showing the main category of subject and sub-categories displayed by a subject name. The major sub-categories may be computer science, librarianship/library and information science, Society, among several ones. Users can post to remaining subject, reply to earlier ones, or produce new newsgroup (TechTarget, 2016). It is a network of news discussion groups and the process uses Network Transfer Protocol (NNTP). Most members uses a newsreader, a program that runs in a computer and connects the user to a news server on the internet (Beal, 2016).

In a study on continuing professional development and innovation of library services delivery in Nigeria libraries, inhibitors and way out by Ukachi and Onucha (2013). The study evaluated the numerous procedures of continuing professional development (CPD) that academic Nigeria libraries have partaken in doing the last 5years with a view to establish the numerous approach in which skills obtain such programs had empowered innovation and delivery of innovative information service. The review research design was adopted for the study. Respondents were selected form 5 universities in south west, Nigeria. Purposive sampling technique was used for this selection. The results shown that library professionals partake in a few methods of continuing professional development programmes and little skills obtain during the trainings are slightly employed in given library innovative and creative services. The main inhibitors being inventive and resourceful with the obtain a skills were recognized to be epileptic power supply, poor access to internet as a result of bad bandwidth More so, the findings revealed that only 45% of librarians in these institutions utilizes internet platforms such as online forum, news group for exchange of ideas as well as acquisition of skills and knowledge necessary for professional development.

In his study of online communities and learning through Social interaction in San



Francisco U.S, Nichani (2010) discovered that people form newsgroups to pursue shared goals, ideals, interest and connect with one another irrespective of location and time, to forge and strengthen relationship in the social learning platform. In that case, a community of learners sustains learning, as social groups, and provides the means for their followers to learn (Brown,& Duguid, 2000). The author affirmed that tools such as newsgroups, online forums, email etc, are used by many online course facilitators with perceived richer insights, knowledge sharing, problem solving, support, those results in motivating, bonding and intellectual conversations among followers.

### Methods

The study adopted a correlational research design with stratified sampling and purposively technique was used to collect a sample of 300 respondents who are certified librarians from universities, Polytechnics, and Colleges of Education in South-South geopolitical zone, Nigeria. A 40-item questionnaire instrument titled 'Asynchronous digital tool and continuing professional development Questionnaire (ADTCPDQ)' validated, pilot tested and found suitable was applied for gatherings of data. The data were collected by the researcher with some research assistant. Data collected

were analyzed using Pearson product moment correlation and multiple regression statistics. The outcome obtained is presented appropriately .

### Results

The results are presented according to the hypotheses.

**Hypothesis one:** The hypothesis states that there is no significant association among the use of email and continuing professional development of librarians. The independent variable in this hypothesis is email usage while the dependent variable is professional development of librarians. To test the hypothesis, Pearson product moment correlation was apply for evaluation of data. The outcome is displayed in Table 1.

The outcomes of the analysis in the Table 1 reveal that there is a positive significant relationship between the use of email and continuing professional development of Librarians. This is evident in the fact that the calculated r- value of .751 is higher than the critical r- value of = .113 at 298 degree of freedom and .05 significance level. Hence, the null hypothesis is unaccepted. Also the value of .751 is fairly close to +1.0 which indicates that the association is strong.

**Table 1: Pearson product moment correlational analysis of the relationship between email usage and professional development of librarians (N=300)**

Variable	$\sum X$ $\sum Y$	$\sum X^2$ $\sum Y^2$	$\sum XY$	r-cal.
Use of email	3569	43943	57741	.751*
Professional development	4659	78757		

rcrit = 113, df = 298, P<.05, \*Significant

**Hypothesis two:** Hypothesis two explains that there is no significant relationship between participation in newsgroup and continuing professional improvement of librarians. The independent variable in this hypothesis is participation in newsgroup, while the dependent variable is professional

development of librarians. To test the hypothesis, Pearson product moment correlation coefficient formula was used for data evaluation. The level of significance was set at P<.05. The outcome is as displayed in Table 2.

The outcome of the evaluation in Table 2 shows that the Calculated  $r$  – value of .789 for the use of newsgroup is higher than the critical  $r$  – value of .113 at .05 significance level and 298 degree of freedom. Therefore the null hypothesis is unaccepted. Based on the result strong helpful association

among the use of newsgroup and continuing professional development of librarians is observed. This shows direct relationship between the use of newsgroup digital tool and continuing professional development of librarians.

**Table 2: Pearson’s product moment correlation analysis of the association among participation in newsgroup and professional development librarians (N=300)**

Variable	$\sum X$ $\sum Y$	$\sum X^2$ $\sum Y^2$	$\sum XY$	r-cal.
Participation in newsgroup	2929	30709	48390	.789*
Professional development	4659	78757		

crit = 113, df = 298,  $P < .05$ , \*Significant

## Discussion

The outcome of the data evaluates in respect of hypothesis one revealed that there is significant relationship between the use of email and continuing professional development of librarians. This could be as a result of the fact that email has become an essential digital tool where staff receive materials relevant to their profession for their updates. Access to email has become widespread in almost every country the world over via networks of corporate and institution or providers of services of internet. An educator can use email easily to transmit similar messages to all individuals in a group or member of individuals can apply it to function collectively on tasks. While it can take days or weeks to send lecture materials across the country and weeks to go round the world by traditional post, email can take just seconds whatever is the volume of materials. The result could also be as a result of the fact that in continuing professional development (CPD), email is being used creatively for teaching and learning. Its value as an adjunct feedback mechanism for teachers and learners has created positive impact in the learning process.

The result of this study is consistent with Ojokheta (2009) who studied the effectiveness of organizing learning and teaching via email among 300 level distance learning students of the University of Ibadan and discovered that email was widely used as

it increased learners performance, boost interest in doing assignments, and seriousness in their learning as they freely retrieved instructions and feedback within minutes. The result is in line with Sadat and Rahman (2010) study who found email communication as important instruments of education for learning in Bangladesh Open University in their distance learning programme with 21 accredited programmes with 82% of the respondents using email communication tool, and 91% them preferring the use of email at the regional and local resource centres for learning, it supports the digital tool as important learning platform. Also 52% of the requirement had their personal email connection as a matter of priority.

The outcome of the data evaluation in respect of hypothesis two revealed that there is significant association among newsgroup and continuing professional development of librarians. This result could be that in newsgroup, varieties of topics and issues are discussed by members of that group. It is affirmed that using newsgroups can be a humble and worthwhile approach of locating information and that when used impressively and purpose fullness they can help as an low-priced way to knowledge and skills acquisition. More so, the result could be due to the fact that newsgroup is a means of finding detailed information about a project area that the main stream media tend to over simplify. Secondly, to a reasonable extent,

newsgroups are excellent ways to find out professional websites to visit on particular area of interest and collect detailed information available that can bring clarity on an issue of confusion as well as provide knowledge which hitherto was absent.

The finding is line with that of Adebayo (2014) who study was on information and application of Social Media within Librarians in Nigeria. The study found out that the use of newsgroup helps staff who cannot sit down and learn due to the nature of job, dangers associated with traveling long distances. It was also found out that the use of newsgroup as an online participatory forum helps for information exchange and dissemination, and it is a platform where formative discussions are carried out about a particular domain, and which encouraged the spirit of networking in learning, and of course professional growth.

### Conclusion

Upon on the results of the work, there is a general increase of awareness on the efficacy of asynchronous digital tools as sources of flexible learning for continuing professional development while still working. The flexible and ubiquitous nature of asynchronous digital tools can provide solution to the time, place and teacher dependent method of learning that produced little impact on professional development of librarians. The use of email and newsgroup are veritable online tools/platforms with the potential to facilitate acquisition of knowledge and skills for librarian's professional development.

Based on the results and conclusion of the of the study, recommendations are made as follows:

1. It is imperative that tertiary institutions in the South-South, Nigeria should provide array of digital communication tools and infrastructural facilities that can enable librarians and other professionals to look-up or log-in to access information desired for learning and professional development.
2. There is need for continual awareness creation among librarians in tertiary institutions about the availability and viability of these online tools to explore and use for their professional development and practice.

### References

- Beal, I. (2016).librarians' use of social media for professional development. *Library Management*, 26(8/9), 519-522.
- Bolin , M. (2013).Social capital. Intellectual capital, and the organizational advantage. *The Academy of Management Review*, 23(2), 242 – 266.
- Brown, J. S. & Duguid, P. (2000). *The Social Life of Information*. Boston: Harvard business Press.
- Chanseawrassamee, M. (2012) Utilization of social media platform and professional development program on Turkish librarians. *Journal of research and Practice* , 1(12), 1452-1556
- Evans, S., Martin, B.& Poatsy, T. (2007). Anderson use of the internet for staff professional development: supports and inhibitors. *Journal of Mathematics Teacher Education*, 8(1), 35-59.
- Fisher, C. (2006). Asynchronous learning and adult motivation: Catching fog in a Gauze Bag. learning solutions blog.
- Kask, S., Wood, D. and Brett, N. (2014) Communication dynamics: Discussion boards, weblogs and the development of communities of enquiry in online learning environments. In Atkinson, R., McBeath, C., Jonas-Dwyer, D. & Philips, R. (Eds), *Beyond the comfort Zone: Proceedings of the 21<sup>st</sup> ASCILITE Conference*274-283. Perth. Retrieved April 15, 2007 from, <http://www.ascilite.org.au/conferences/perth04/procs/farmer.html>.
- Malcolm S. (1984) Learning and teaching in a synchronous collaborative environment. *Journal of Computer Assisted Learning*, 15, 129-138.

- Mark, W. (1993). Continuing Education for the Busy Entrepreneurs [www.businessdictionary.com/article/651/continuing-education-for-the-busy-entrepreneur/](http://www.businessdictionary.com/article/651/continuing-education-for-the-busy-entrepreneur/).
- Mick, C. S. & Middlebrooke, G. (2015). Asynchronous and synchronious modalities. [Wac.clostate.edu/chapter3.pdf](http://Wac.clostate.edu/chapter3.pdf).
- Nichani, S. (2010). *Is your email the boss of you?* <http://www.linkedin.com/pulse/your-email-boss-of-you/>.
- Pandey , M. (2010) Mediating and regulating teacher education discourse: Shifting goal posts in an electronic learning community. Paper presented at the Australian Association for Research in Education, Brisbane, Australia, December.
- Pullagurla, A. (2014). Examining interactivity in synchronous virtual classrooms. *The International Review of Research in Open and Distance Learning*, 13(2), 68-89.
- TechTarget, (2016)*Statistical Digest of libraries and librarians in Nigeria*. Abuja: Limpess Business Resources.
- Techtarget, N. (2016). relevance and adequacy of it skills. In Librarians In Southern Nigeria In the Digital and Electronic Environment in Nigeria. NLA 49th National Conference and AGM Compendium, Awka, Anambra State 10-15 July, 81-101.
- Tsehabitsher, L. (2015). Face-to-face versus threaded discussions: The role of time and higher-order thinking. *Journal of Asynchronous Learning Networks*, 7(3), 55-65.
- Ukachi, F. and Onucha, U. (2013). Continuing professional development and innovation of library services delivery in Nigeria libraries. Inhibitors and way out. *International Society for Technology in Education*, 39(1), 22-43.