# Challenges and prospects of using of social media in disseminating agricultural information to farmers towards realization African Union Agenda 2063

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## Abstract

*This paper focused on the challenges and prospects of using of social media in disseminating agricultural information to farmers towards realization African union agenda 2063 from the perspective of public and community libraries. Data was collected from various sources, journals, research papers, internet resources and also through number of discussion with professionals from the field of librarianship and agriculture. The paper presented a synopsis of the African Union agenda 2063 and highlighted on the followings: social media and its relevance in the dissemination of agricultural information, rationalization for the provision of agricultural information towards the realization of AU agenda, forms of agricultural information that can be disseminated by public and community libraries towards actualization of AU agenda 2063, challenges and prospects of using social media in disseminating agricultural information to farmers to ensure that AU agenda 2063 is fully realized. The paper concludes that social media should be integrated and used by public and community libraries to provide agricultural information to farmers.*

*Keywords: Agricultural Information, Community Libraries, Public Libraries, Rural Dwellers, Social Media*

## 1.1 Introduction

Information plays a pivotal role in our present day society, most especially in the development processes both in agriculture and rural development. Information is an important ingredient in attaining competitive and sustainable development in both developed and developing countries. Information is one among the major drivers of social and economic transformation in the world. Also, the contribution of information in facilitating social and economic development has been well recognized globally. Information is a necessity in the overall development of any society. People rely on information to take decision on issues that affect them, the environment and the society. Information therefore is an integral component of contemporary society. Individuals, groups, organizations etc always have the felt need for information upon which decisions are based. No doubt, the actualization of individual, groups, or organizational goals is determined by the level and relevant information available and upon which decisions can be based. In other words, every activity of mankind is information–determined and agriculture is not an

exemption.

Availability of adequate and accessible information will improve the efficiency of agricultural development projects and programs. Information has a key role to play in agricultural development. It is an indispensable factor in the practice of farming and it is the basis for extension service delivery. There is direct relationship between the provision of effective information and agricultural development.

Agriculture is one of the most important issues which have always been under consideration throughout the world especially in developed and non-developed countries. It plays the vital role in the overall development of any nation. Agriculture is the major driving force for rural growth and development. Agricultural production remains the main source of livelihood for most rural communities in developing countries and Sub-Saharan Africa. Agriculture is essential for inclusive development because it produces food as well as economic wealth for many of the world's poorest people - wealth that allows for improved livelihoods through better health care, education, infrastructure improvements and greater investment in environmentally sound practices. Agriculture is a key sector in most developing countries and a happy nation is one that is able to feed her citizens (Okezie & Simonyan, 2011; Sokoya, Onifada & Alabi, 2012). However, agriculture must change to meet the rising demand, to contribute more effectively to the reduction of poverty and malnutrition and to become ecologically more sustainable (Sustainable Development Solution Network, 2013). One of such areas that agriculture must change is the provision and utilization of agricultural information facet.

In agriculture, information is a key in determining extent of productivity as farmers need to upgrade to current practices for higher yield and income. Agricultural information when provided and utilized improves practices, farm income, living conditions and agricultural development (Soyemi and Haliso, 2015), agricultural information includes agricultural messages via extension service embodied in agricultural technologies and shared between the actors in the agricultural extension systems. Proper provision and utilization of agricultural information can play a vital role in enhancing agricultural productivity and addressing the problem of food insecurity being witnessed globally. Information can be communicated in various ways and one of the contemporary medium of communicating agricultural information to users is social media platforms. This paper therefore seeks to examine the challenges and prospects of using social media in disseminating agricultural information with reference to public and community libraries in Africa.

## 2.1 Literature Review

Social media is a mainstream form of communication around the world, and continues to grow in popularity with the increase in the number of Smartphone's and the ease of use whilst on the go Social media are electronic communication tools that allow users to interact, create share, retrieve and exchange information and ideas in any form that can be discussed upon, archived and used by virtual communities and networks (Stanley, 2013; Barau & Afrad, 2017). Social media as noted by Sokoya, Onifade and Alabi (2012), has become extremely popular because it allows people to connect in the online world to form a group, a forum and a community where ideas and information can be exchanged without any geographical barrier. Social media no doubt is more than more conversation between individual. Social media platforms are global action of information and activities sharing with people connected to, and associated with. Naruka, Verma, Sarangdevot, Pachaur, Kerketta and

Singh (2017:2) writing on the relevance of social media to famers asserted that:

> Social media can offer amazing opportunities to farmers. It can help farmers to seek information on farm operations, clarify their doubts on plants, livestock disease symptoms and can have immediate access to market related information . . . The power of social media can be harnessed and will be beneficial for the farming communities.

Ajayi (2015:19) recognizing the impact of social media in redefining the activities of mankind asserted that: Social media is redefining human level activities and interactions across all sectors of the economy. The dynamism, ease, innovativeness, wide coverage, access and customers networking inherent in social media networking system has made social media perhaps the most powerful tool in terms of speed and cost-effectiveness for information dissemination and marketing to the world's growing population.

Social media has been acknowledged to be gaining popularity in the various sectors of the global business world. Various social media platforms are being maximally utilized in sharing information related to the production of goods and services. Social media is all about people. It is a way to establish relationships, disseminate information, and hook up with different audience of people you may never meet in actual life. The popularity of the social media leads to a new communication framework where individual have the power to interact, collaborate and share information (Vassiliadou, Vogiatizi, Amygdalas & Mpoutakidis, 2011). Social media has the characteristic of being very easy to access since there is more than one way to log in social media platforms like mobile and computer-based technology (Vassiliadou *et al,* 2011).

The degree of social media penetration is obviously growing faster than imagined couple with the level of technology advancement that continue to bring world at everyone's finger tips and make information accessible without having to go through hiccups of travelling and delays (Barau & Afrad, 2017). Social media is changing the way people connect and share information, and of which librarians are not excluded. Many organization both in the public and private sectors, as a well as religious organizations including non-governmental organization (NGOs) are deploying social media tool into their operations and activities, hence librarianship as a profession is not exempted from the trend (Benson, Amaechi & Onuoha, 2017).

Social media has taken the world by storm through dozens of websites, mobile apps, and other forms of technologies that improve the way people communicate with one another (Olanusi, 2017). Benson, Okorafor and Ekeruche (2017) citing Amarakaone noted that technological advancement has helped in repositioning the libraries with great opportunities that will facilitate their ability to reach out to library users beyond the bounds of the physical library building. Social media has changed the way we communicate, read, search, think, talk, watch, listen, and sometimes starts a revolution – be it political and or social (Barau & Afrad, 2017).

Libraries as a social institution can use social media to inform farmers on current issues related to agriculture that can enhance productivity. The peculiarity of the library as an institution is its being instrumental to information provision to all. Provision of timely accurate and relevant information is vital to the sustainability of any meaningful development programme both in developed and developing countries (Benson, Anyalebechi & Amaechi, 2015; Ariola, Nwaigwe and Anyalebechi, 2017). Library and information science practitioners have the responsibility of providing agricultural

information to rural dwellers which will help in boosting agricultural productivity (Amaechi, Benson, Dike & Okere, 2016).

The discourse therefore is presented under the following sub-headings:

a. A Synopsis of the African Union Agenda 2063
b. Social Media and Its Relevance in the Dissemination of Agricultural Information
c. Justification for the Provision of Agricultural Information towards the Realization of African Union Agenda
d. Place of Public and Community Libraries in Disseminating Agricultural Information toward Full Delivery of AU Agenda
e. Forms of Agricultural Information that can be disseminated by Public and Community Libraries towards Actualization of AU Agenda 2063
f. Challenges and Prospects of Using of Social Media in Disseminating Agricultural Information to Farmers

## 2.2 A Synopsis of the African Union Agenda 2063

The Agenda 2063 also called *"the Africa we want"* was adopted on 26th May, 2013 at the 50th anniversary of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) now African Union (AU). The agenda is "a shared strategic framework for inclusive growth and sustainable development for Africa's transformation over the next 50 years' (African Union Commission, 2014, p.10). The agenda is based on Africans shared values and a common destiny and focuses on these eight key areas: African identity and renaissance, decolonization and the right to self determination, unity and integration, socio-economic development, peace and security, democratic governance, African's destiny and African place in the world( Udah,

2014).

The guiding vision for Agenda, 2063 is the AU Vision of "an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in international arena. DeGhetto, Gray and Kiggundu (2017, p16) described Agenda 2063 as a participatory, people-driven process centered on a series of consultations and "conversation" with various stakeholder groups across sectors and society. The agenda is a part of the African Renaissance. It is anchored on the principle of participation and inclusivity of all stakeholders including the African Diaspora (Udah, 2014). The fundamental philosophy behind the 2063 agenda is that by 2063, Africa is expected to catch up with the rest of the world in technology and infrastructure in size and quality. Also by 2063, it is expected that opportunity will abound to end the horror of illegal migrations of African youth in search of greener pastures elsewhere.

Mores so, agenda 2063 challenges us to think hard about managing Africa's future, especially managing across generations in terms of politics, business and society as a whole (DeGhetto Gray & Kiggundu, 2017). Agenda 2063 strives to enable Africa remained focused and committed to the ideals envisaged in the context of a rapidly changing world (Africa Adaptation Newsletter, 2016). Agenda 2063 embrace and reinforce the vision of African and endorses the 12 continental priorities of the African Union contained in the AU Constitutive Act which form the basis for the development of continental frameworks, such as the Programme for Infrastructure, the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme, the African Mining Vision, the African Governance Architecture and the African Water Vision (African Adaptation Newsletter, 2016).

Agenda 2063 represents a promise for an alternate path to growth and development in a continental environment of great uncertainty and many imponderables (Pere, 2016). It aims to position Africa for growth over the next 50 years, incorporating lesson and experiences from the pasts. The ultimate goal is to secure three ideals - unity, prosperity, and peace - for all its citizens (DeGhetto, Gray & Kiggundu, 2017).

Agenda 2063 represents a transformation vision of the Africa Union (AU) to achieve integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in the global arena (AUC). According to Udah (2014), whilst the agenda 2063 offers a roadmap on how to achieve the desired future for the Africa we want, Africa's development challenges call for changes in attitudes, new level of consciousness, a greater degree of innovation and handwork. It also demands discipline and transparency, honesty about what works and what does not as far as development is concerned. In summary, African Union agenda 2063 is focused on ensuring that by the year 2063, Africa as a continent has become a better place to live.

## 2.3 Social Media and Its Relevance in the Dissemination of Agricultural Information

Social media includes a wide variety of technologies that facilitates communication and interaction processes between individuals, groups of persons and organization. Social media platforms therefore are tools of communication used in sharing information and items quickly. Social media connects people in a simple and easy way. Through social media, people who associate together could share thoughts, ideas, items etc. Social media platforms help citizen to explore new ways of cooperation and collective action, thereby providing opportunities for mobilizing people around a common cause or for sensitizing the public on specific issues (Kamp, 2016). Social media are an artificial platform of "common knowledge" where an event or product can be highly valued. Social media are a contemporary channel of digital communication that is composed of various evolving tools for discussion, interaction and sharing of formation among people. These digital tools include among others Facebook, Twitter, Farm book, WhatsApp, ResearchGate (Kanska, Jarolimek, Itlavsa, Simek, Vanek & Vogeltanzora, 2012; Barau & Afrad, 2017).

Social media is about creating, sharing, adapting and re-using content while engaging in digital dialogue and collaboration, activities that are largely facilitated by web-based and mobile-based technologies. Social media are modern interaction communication channels through which people connect to one another, share ideas, experiences, pictures, messages and information of interest (Chisenga, Kedeni and Sam, 2014; Benson, Okorafor & Ekeruche, 2017).

Social media provided opportunities for farmers and stakeholders in agriculture to strengthen their interactions with co-farmers and other stakeholders in agricultural activity. Social media has become an integral component of communication system both in developed and developing nations of the world. By harnessing social media, farmers could easily communicate and utilized vital information that could contribute to high yields and enhance their productivity output, thereby contributing also to the full delivery of the AU agenda 2063.

Social media as an instrument of communication would help both rural and urban farmers in sharing of agriculture related information. Farmers would not only utilize

social media for personal agricultural activities but can also deploy it for group or collaborative agricultural activities. Agriculture is concerned, social media networks have provided many opportunities to the farmers and eased the process of selling crop through online schemes resulting in the elimination of middlemen. However, timeliness of agricultural information is very crucial to farmers' success and farmers need to be provided with the information at the right time so as to apply that information in their farming activities for better farm productivity (Rai and Shalila (2013; Naruka *et al*, 2017).

Farmers use social media to put a face on how food is grown. Farmers share photos and stories about how their farms are operated, making a personal connection with consumers (National Sustainable Agriculture Information Services, 2012). According to Stanley (2013), the value of social media for the agricultural industry lies in the value of social capital, as it brings the farmer, industry and consumer closer together so that there is more transparency, engagement, trust and authenticity in the supply chain. A growing cadre of professionals, among them agronomists and farmers are harnessing social media as a tool for communicating with fellow colleagues, consumers and future clients about the business of agriculture (Vassiliado *et al,* 2011).

Social media have ensured quick delivery and response to information between the receiver and sender. It is an effective way of ensuring successful delivery and sustainability of a viable agricultural extension subsector (Barau & Afrad, 2017). Application of social media in agricultural activities would enable farmers to receive and share timely information with co-farmers, the consumers of their products and other stakeholders in agricultural development. Social media have changed the dimension and approaches to provision of information

services as it has opened information science professionals to a world of unlimited possibilities in the discharge of professional responsibilities (Benson, Amaechi & Onuoha, 2017).

### 3.3 Rationalization for the Provision of Agricultural Information towards the Realization of African Union Agenda

Poverty and lack of awareness of the modern farming techniques portray the life style of people in the rural areas, majority of them being peasant farmers and still using primitive tools that yields little or no results, culminating in low quantity of agricultural products. This could not be unconnected with dearth of information and also points to the need for information experts to organize some training programmes for the set of rural dwellers thereby enhancing their rural development and boosting their living standard (Idiegbeyan-Ose & Akpoghorne, 2009:23).

Agricultural Information is very important in agricultural development and useful in decision making in agricultural related matters. The availability of agricultural information will help farmers in making rational decisions that will contribute significantly to the agricultural development in any society. Agricultural information according to Mittal and Mehar (2013, p.18) plays a crucial role in agricultural development as well as in improving the livelihoods of farmers. Information to them has an extensive and multifaceted role in agriculture. It empowers farmers to respond to different type of risk, market incentives and competition more efficiently. Agricultural information is central in enhancing accelerated agricultural productivity, facilitating poverty alleviation and rural urban migration. Availability of adequate and accessible agricultural information will improve the efficiency of agricultural

development projects and programs. Information can be shared among farming stakeholders within a given community, to enhance productivity and bring about agricultural development. Agricultural information generation and dissemination are necessary for the development of agricultural products. Access to agricultural information is critical to the growth and production of the agriculture sector. Agriculture is key frontier in the drive towards sustainable green economies and farmers are key to green economies because they interact with everything found on water and land (Sani, Boadi, Oladokum and Kalusopa, 2014; Chisita, Chinyemba, Mataranyika & Matiza, 2015).

The benefits derived from utilizing agricultural information include having access to current and timely agricultural information, adequate and accuracy of information and access to varied agricultural materials. Agricultural information is useful for farmers because it helps them to overcome their inadequacies in knowledge of certain basic practices that may include technical, marketing, social, and legal agricultural information (Amaechi and Ossai-Onah, 2015). According to Olaninyi, Adebayo and Akintola (2011), for any true agricultural progress, farmers must know, understand and act on the available information, and how far people progress in whatever they are doing depend largely upon the accessibility to accurate and reliable information as well as their perception of utilization of available information.

Provision of agricultural information from the above would help in the attainment of African Union aspiration of increased agricultural productivity in Africa. However, in order for Africa to experience prosperity based on inclusive growth and sustainable development, one of the specific goals is modern agriculture for increased productivity

and production - the priority area in this context is agricultural productivity and production.

Libraries and other information centres could post audio feeds or videos of indigenous knowledge to the social media and communication technology available in a particular community (Owiny, Mehta & Maretezki, 2014). Ariola, Nwaigwe and Anyalebechi (2017:134) asserted that: One of the key factors that determine the successful implementation of any agenda is clarity. It has become a truism that no government initiative or programmes can be achieved without the people having a full understanding of the context and content of such programme. While the government alone cannot perform the function of sensitizing the populace, other relevant agencies under the government can help carrying out such function. One of such agency that can assist the government is the library.

The library as an information agency occupies a central position in creating awareness of the programmes and initiatives of government aimed at making life better for its citizenry. The importance of library as an information services oriented institution cannot be downplayed, not even at the global level (Ariola, Nwaigwe and Anyelebechi, 2017). Library and information professional through the public libraries and community information centres can help in disseminating this information to rural dwellers (Amaechi, Benson, Dike & Okere, 2016)

## 3.4 Forms of Agricultural Information that can be disseminated by Public and Community Libraries towards Actualization of AU Agenda 2063

Public and community libraries provide, organize and disseminate various forms of agricultural information to its users. Below are types of agricultural information that can be disseminated by public and community

libraries in Africa:

**a. *Information on new farming methods and species***: new discovery are emerging every second on how to improve agriculture and attain high productivity levels. Worthy of note is that most farmers would remain unaware of this new discovery unless it is brought to their notice, hence the need for public libraries in collaboration with other agencies or stakeholders in agricultural development to ensure that the new discoveries are disseminated to farmers through social media. The implication is that when information on new farming techniques are made available to farmers through social media, it will at the long run contribute significantly to the AU Agenda of having an Africa with modern agriculture practices.

**b. *Information on fertilizer application:*** Public and Community libraries can disseminate information on fertilizer application through the social media. Obviously, most farmers are not aware of the right quantity and quality of fertilizer to apply in order to experience increased productivity. The implication is that disseminating information on fertilizer application through social media will enable public libraries to reach out to a large audience thereby contributing significantly to the African Union agenda 2063 aspiration of having an Africa that adopt modern agricultural for increase productivity. Also, when farmers have access to information on fertilizers, improve varieties of seeds and seedling; they are likely to improve on their output (Amaechi, Benson, Dike & Okere, 2016).

**c. *Information on farm machinery availability***: Public libraries could provide information on how and where to get modern farm machinery that can be integrated to agricultural practices for increased

productivity. Farmers can be informed of the latest farm machines and technologies related to agriculture.

**d. *Information on plant protection***: public and community libraries can to facilitate African Union Agenda 2063 aspiration of ensuring realization of modern agriculture for increased productivity and production through provision of information on plat protection.

**e. *Information on credit facility and availability***: most farmers do not know where and how to access credit facility for agricultural development. Public libraries can provide information on credit facility and availability to enable both urban and rural famer have knowledge of how and where to access credit facilities. When this is done, it would go a long way in ensuring that the African Union Agenda aspiration of modern Agriculture and increased productivity would become a reality. Most rural dwellers as noted by Ariola, Nwaigwe and Anyalebechi (2017), do not have access to vital information relating to the benefit they can derive by accessing credit facilities from the financial institutions. Most rural farmers end up producing only for family consumption which could not contribute significantly to national development, because they lack access to credit facilities. Library and information professionals have the professional responsibility of ensuring that rural farmers have timely access to information on credit facilities provided by financial institutions as this would contribute towards increase in food productivity and reduction of hunger (Amaechi, Benson, Dike & Okere, 2016).

**f. *Information on pest control:*** Public and community libraries could disseminate information on pest control through the social media. Farmers require information on how to

control pest in order for them to experience increase in their agricultural activities.

*g.* **Information on storage methods:** Public and community libraries can also provide information to the rural farmers on the modern storage methods through social media, when this is done; it has the capacity to influence the farmers to increase their productivity level. In other words, when information on proper storage methods are disseminated to the farmers it will motivate them to increase their output.

### 3.1 Methodology

This paper exclusively worked on secondary data. The narrative textual case study (NTCS) method was adopted for the study. Data was collected from various sources, journals, research papers, internet resources and also through number of discussion with professionals from the field of librarianship and agriculture.

### 4.1 Challenges and Prospects of Using of Social Media in Disseminating Agricultural Information to Farmers

The challenges that public and community libraries as well as other information centres in developing countries faced in the course of using social media to disseminate information include but not limited to the followings:

a. **Non-Existence of Social Media Policy** (SMP): There is no well defined policy guiding the use of social media in disseminating agricultural information. There should be clear definition of the forms of agricultural information to disseminate to the people, the mode of dissemination, should it be in a personalized form or generality form (group discussion forum). Having recognized the significance of social media in dissemination of information of any kind, it is

pertinent that libraries formulate a viable social media policy to define what forms of agricultural information to disseminate to farmers, this will curtail a situation whereby anybody wakes up and post junk information to the farmers, it will minimize misapplication of the social media.

b. **Non-uniformity in the use of social media platform among farmers:** there are plethora of social available for use, different people use social media platforms that are characteristically different, since most farmers are not likely to be in one social platform, disseminating agricultural information by public and community libraries becomes a little problematic.

c. **Lack of ICT skills:** Most librarians working in public and community libraries in some developing countries are none ICT-compliant. Since, they lack the requisite ICT skills, utilization of social media to disseminate agricultural information may be hindered. Also, worth noting is that this challenge is a two-way process because, most farmers are not ICT-compliant, so even when librarians are compliant and are ready to use social media to disseminate agricultural information to the farmers, the low ICT literacy level of the farmers in most developing countries in Africa poise a challenge to the library.

d. **Lack of Access to ICTs:** Most public and community libraries in developing countries lacks full access to modern and contemporary technologies and this apparently limits the efforts of library and information centres in utilizing social media in disseminating agricultural information.

e. **Lack of innovation and creative skills:** most librarians working in the public and community libraries lacks innovations and creative abilities to maximally explore the

potential inherent in the application of technologies to library services

f. **Rural Farmers Apathy towards Use of Social Media:** It has been observed that most rural farmers tend to have an apathetic attitude towards use of social media in receiving and sharing of information. This no doubt, would have an adverse effect on the extent that public libraries could be able to reach out to the farmers on social media platforms.

g. **Cost implication:** public and community libraries may encounter the challenges of cost in using social media to disseminate agricultural information to rural farmers. As noted by Barau and Afrad (2017:58), large number of farmers are subsistent with little to incur data cost for accessing social media. More so, social media and mobile technologies will only be used by people who can afford to purchase computers or cell phones or in other ways gain access to the internet (Owiny, Mehta and Maretzki, 2014).

h. **Lack of clear understanding of agricultural information needs of farmer:** Lack of clear understanding of the agricultural information needs of farmers is one of the major challenges to effective use of social media in disseminating agricultural information to farmers in developing countries. No wonder, Benson Anyalebechi and Amaechi (2015:70) opined that library and information professionals in the public and community library sector should examine and assessed the agricultural information needs of the rural dwellers, developed a framework through which these needs can be met.

## 5.1 Prospects of Using of Social Media in Disseminating Agricultural Information

Though public and community libraries as well as those engaged in farming are faced with a lot of challenges, there are still opportunities that can be maximally be harnessed in this digital era

**i. Flexibility and portability of smartphones:** The smartphones unlike the television and computers can be easily carried about (around). This has made it easier for public libraries to reach out to the farmers anytime, any day and any where provided they are within the range of internet connectivity. The flexibility and portability of smartphones will enable farmers to use it to access agricultural information while in the farm or anywhere. The components and functionality of mobile phone are highly flexible and user-friendly, these will in no small measure contributed to increase in the use of it in accessing agricultural information among farmers and also its use in disseminating information by public and community libraries.

**ii. Proliferation of smartphone:** The over proliferation of smartphones such as iphone, Android, windows phone, Nokia and blackberry which are internet-enabled phones with sophisticated in-built software and functionalities will help librarians, public and community libraries in utilizing it to disseminate agricultural information to farmers both in urban and rural areas. It is worthy to note that smartphone are not costly and this factor will contribute ownership and use of it in accessing information.

**iii. Flexibility of social media platform:** The flexibility of social media platforms which does not required special training would also contribute significantly to its use in dissemination of agricultural information to farmers in developing countries. It is easy to edit and upload data online. The social media platforms are usually user-friendly. This would contribute greatly to its uses among the

farmers and librarians.

**iv. High desire for information:** we are living in an information conscious society, farmers are always conscious of getting information on the latest method of farming, type of fertilizer to apply, the right equipment to use in agriculture etc. The desire of farmers to constantly access information at any costs makes it viable for public and community libraries to use the social media as platform for dissemination of agricultural information.

**v. Prevalence of wireless internet connectivity:** Unlike those days, for you to make use of Internet connectivity, you have to visit a nearby cybercafé where you are either charged per hour based on their billing system. The case is different today, one does not need to visit a cyber café because of the prevalence of wireless internet connectivity, besides virtually all smartphones are internet-enabled which makes it easier to connect to Internet services. This is good opportunity that can be explored by public and community libraries.

**vi. Low cost of internet services/services by internet service providers:** The low cost of subscribing to the Internet this day no doubt is a good opportunity that can be harnessed by both public libraries and the farmers in dissemination and accessing of information respectively.

**vii. Unhealthy competition among service providers:** The unhealthy competition among communication service providers is significantly an open door that can be maximized by public and community libraries to ensure that farmers have unhindered access to agricultural information. For instance in the Nigerian environment, the giveaway data bundles for browsing that is offered by the

communication network like MTN, GLO, 9mobile and AIRTEL to its subscriber would make it easier for public libraries and the farmers alike to always be on the net disseminating and accessing agricultural information. Nowadays, getting data bundles is not difficult to come by, for instance, the various promo strategies whereby data bundles can be shared easily among or between subscribers would makes it easy for subscribers (farmers) to always be online.

**Conclusion and Recommendations**

The implication of this paper is that though social media can be effectively used in the dissemination of agricultural information towards the realization of the agricultural facet of the African Union agenda 2063, there are still challenges that undermine the success of public and community libraries use of social media in disseminating agricultural information. However, despite the identified challenges associated with use of social media in disseminating agricultural information, opportunities abound that can be maximally harnessed by public and community libraries to ensure that farmers in developing countries have access to agricultural information that would facilitate the full delivery of the AU agenda 2063.

The position of this paper is that social media should be integrated and used by public and community libraries in the provision of agricultural information to farmers. To actualize this, it is imperative that public and community libraries partner with allied institutions and non-governmental organization in providing ICT literacy programmes to farmers especially those in rural areas. Morse so, various online discussion forums can be created through which public and community libraries can easily reach out to farmers with agricultural information that meets their needs and also contributes to the full realization of African

Union agenda of having an Africa with increased agriculture and through modern agricultural practices. Effective utilization of social media platforms in reaching out to farmers is a necessity in this dispensation. Therefore, if the aspiration AU 2063 to increase agricultural productivity through modern agricultural practices must be a reality, public and community libraries must fully integrated social media into library service delivery.

The following recommendations were made:
1. *Formulation of social media policy:* It is pertinent that librarians come up with well-articulated social media policy. This will help in regulating the flow of information that will be sent to users through social media platform.

2. *User analysis on social media platform used by farmers:* There is need to carry out user analysis to determine and establish the predominant social media platform used by farmers. This will help in creating social media groups that will facilitate dissemination of agricultural information to farmers in rural setting.

3. *Possession of requisite ICT skills:* Librarians must undertake necessary ICT trainings that will position them effectively utilize social media in disseminating agricultural information to rural dwellers. More so, since most rural farmers are not ICT-Competency, it becomes necessary that specialized basic ICT tracings should be organized for them.

4. *In-depth understanding of agricultural information needs of farmers:* It is important that library and information professionals carry out an in-depth analysis on farmers' agricultural information needs. This will enable them have a clear understanding of the areas where farmers require agricultural information.

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