EMPLOYING THE SOCIAL MEDIA AS AN OUTREACH TOOL FOR THE ACADEMIC LIBRARIES. CASE STUDY: LIBRARY OF AL-MADINAH INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY (MEDIU) MALAYSIA

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Abstract

The main purpose of this study is to elaborate the conceptions of marketing the academic library’s services among the users, which will be established by employing the means of social media websites. This study is focusing on the relationship between the outreach, from hand, and user awareness, information literacy, and services promotion from another hand. In this study, the researcher obtained the data through quantitative approach. A total of 448 participants completed structured questionnaire, the population of the study were on-campus students and staff (academic and administrative) at Al Madinah International University, who use the university’s academic library. It is found that motivator factors, such as user awareness, information literacy, and services promotion, are related to library service outreach. This study suggests that building user awareness may have an impact on academic library services’ outreach. In addition, evidence from this study suggests a positive correlation of information literacy and services outreach. This study also suggests that different promotional activities would have an impact over services outreach in the academic libraries. This study is limited to single-case study, in order to generalize the results to all type of academic libraries, a larger sample of respondents from several academic institution would have increased the general ability of the results. A further study that aimed to study the top social media platforms and their effects on marketing the library services would have provided a wider look to the results. Practical implications: this study has a number of practical implications for marketing the academic library’s services. The study recommended that the management of the academic libraries should develop a clear policy to develop effective marketing strategies aimed at increasing the reach on all of the library services, by considering the factors that will enhance services outreach such as; user awareness, services promotion, and building the user’s information literacy. This study will be a tangible contribution to the body of literature in the field of academic library and services outreach. This study will try to elevate the library outreach concepts in the Malaysian academic libraries, by highlighting the relationship between user awareness, information literacy, and promotion, from a hand, and outreach, from another hand. Although there is a large body of literature which studying the academic library’s marketing in general, the number of studies that focus on Malaysian academic libraries is comparatively limited.

Keywords: Academic library, Marketing, Social Media, Outreach, Awareness, Information literacy, Promotion