

## Content Analysis of Indonesian Academic Libraries' Use of Instagram

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### Abstract

This study aims to analyze academic libraries' Instagram content which focused on Instagram posts. A total of five (5) selected academic library Instagram accounts in Indonesia were examined in this study. The analysis is divided into four group explanation which comprises analysis on profile pictures, posting schedule, type of information posted on Instagram, and interaction with users. The results show that libraries mostly used Instagram as online marketing tool to inform their users about library-related things and events. The findings also revealed that only two of five libraries which seem to respond comments and questions from users, while 4 of five libraries updated their contents regularly. This study recommends that library should take the opportunity of engaging users by communicating actively on social media, in this study, Instagram.

### Keywords

Instagram; Content analysis; Social media; Academic library; Indonesia

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## Introduction

Instagram is a popular social media platform among young adults which used primarily for sharing visual contents (Hild, 2014). Instagram launched their application in October 2010. In Indonesia, Instagram is currently one of the most popular social network used by Internet user. It has been used widely as promotion tool as well as communication instrument to clients. According to the *JakartaGlobe* in 2017, Instagram claimed to have 45 million active users every month in Indonesia. This made Indonesia as the largest Instagram community in Asia Pacific. Indonesian Internet Service Provider Association (APJIII) in 2017 recorded there were 143 million Internet users in Indonesia, with young adults (19-34 years old) active users. It is also found that 87.12 percent of Internet users used social media platforms. These facts afforded library the opportunity to use Instagram as effective platform to engage with their users, as well as promotion tool. Garofalo (2013) explained that academic libraries (university, faculty, and college libraries) can use social media networking to notify their communities about news, events, library resources, and library services. Steiner (2012, p. 2-3) listed some examples of social media: social networking platforms, social news sites, location-based social networking services, website and group creation software, wikis, video and photosharing sites, social bookmarking tools, blogging and vlogging sites, microblogging sites, book sharing sites, community question and answers sites, and virtual world.

Based on the above explanation, Instagram is an example of video and photosharing sites. Instagram is considered as effective social media platform to get engage with users by sharing pictures and video of what happening in the library. Regarding to King (2015, p. 12), libraries might taking photo and short video, also providing captions or comments to each images posted. In addition, the pictures might be more findable by adding keywords based hashtags to each photo or video. *Libraries can share photos or videos of whats happening at the library, and you can use Instagram to give your library a human touch—to share the human side of the library* (King, 2015, p. 12). However, social media is not merely a tool to promote the library. Social media also act as a useful platform to connect with users. As Crawford (2013) stated, the effective use of social networks and online publishing can put the library in closer touch with the community and make the library become more effective. As Steiner (2012, p. 1) explained, that *the aim of social media is to form a large, internally communicative collective that works together to create meaning and content.*

Nowadays, academic libraries in Indonesia have been used Instagram for online marketing and reaching their users across the distance. The libraries share photos, events, posters, and any important information related to the library. Therefore, since academic libraries are taking the advantage of Instagram to engage with the patrons and promote their services and collection, it is necessary to explore how the Instagram is used and what kind of information communicate by the library. This preliminary study aims to analyze selected Indonesian academic libraries'

Instagram posts and classify information posted into categories. This study also expected to give suggestion for the library to maximize the application of Instagram as useful tool for marketing and engaging the users.

## Literature Review

Mon (2015) stated that *establishing a social media presence extends the library's physical manifestation into virtual space and increases the library's visibility, reach, and impact*. Further, Mon (2015) also explained that libraries have used their social media sites for multiple purposes encompassing: evaluation of the library from the patrons' view, outreach new people for library services, marketing library resources, program and services, advocacy to gain community support, enhancing library activities (reference service, collection development) as well as supporting learning agent. However, the library also needs to maintain their social accounts in order to get engage with their users continuously.

The utilization of social media in the academic libraries has been increased year by year. The development of information technology made social media easy to be used and accessed. People can share any news and information instantly without being limited by time and distance. However, academic libraries need to aware what kind of information do they share to reach the users.

The literature of the application of social media by libraries is available broad ranging. Research on particular topic has been conducted by many experts in the field of library and information science. Number amount of the literature also available open access on the Internet. Below is a broad review according to the topics on the content analysis of social media posts by the library.

Al-Daihani and AlAwadhi (2015) carried out a research on "*Exploring academic libraries' use of Twitter: a content analysis*". The aim of their study was to analyze academic libraries' twitter content. There were 17 academic library accounts examined on their study. The finding revealed that academic libraries used twitter as multifaceted tool. De Sarkar (2017) investigated how libraries integrating photo-sharing applications into the library activities. A total of 160 selected library websites from four continents were examined in this study. The result also found that libraries are taking the chance of photo-sharing application to encourage digital inclusion and participation.

Kahn and Bhatti (2012) conducted a research entitled "*Application of social media in marketing of library and information services: A case study from Pakistan*". They elaborated various application of social media for marketing use in the library. The result also revealed some problems faced by libraries, which comprises the lack of knowledge in managing social media accounts, inadequate training chances of using social media, also bad electricity power and Internet connections.

Hild (2014) provided successful strategies experienced by Indiana University's Herman B. Wells Library. The finding claims that Instagram offers opportunities for the library to connect with users. The experience of Herman B. Wells Library in using Instagram has been very positive. Similar experiences also shared by Salomon (2013). Salomon (2013) shared UCLA Powell Library experiences in using Instagram. The result shows that the library more success connecting with the students and engaging in teaching and learning on Instagram than any other social network (Salomon, 2013). Instagram makes sense for the library because it reaches a young, urban, and diverse demographic (Salomon, 2013). Buarki and Alkhateeb (2018) conducted research on the use of hashtags to retrieve information on the web, including Instagram. The research shows how hashtags allowed people to utter their interest to affirm common concern and networks them through social media tools.

## Materials and Methods

This work presents a descriptive analysis of Instagram use by five selected academic libraries in Indonesia based on content analysis. The academic libraries' posts were observed and examined during April 1st – May 7th, 2018. Those libraries were selected based on the following criterias:

1. The library belongs to the top 15 list of universities in Indonesia (according to the 2017 list of the country's 100 top universities by Directorate General of Higher Education, Ministry of Research, Technology and Higher Education of the Republic of Indonesia).
2. The library is a major academic library.
3. The account is actively used by the library, on weekly or monthly basis.

This study elaborated academic libraries' use of Instagram which focused on Instagram posts. The data was collected in response to the following questions:

1. What profile picture do libraries use on Instagram?
2. How do libraries keeping update their posts on Instagram?
3. What type of information do the libraries post on Instagram? What style of language do they use?
4. How do libraries communicate and interact with their users on Instagram?

## Results

### A. Profile Pictures

At the first step, researchers identified the total followers of each selected account during April 1st – May 7th, 2018. The findings show that 2 libraries have between 2000-2600 followers, while another 2 has less than 1000 followers. Only 1 library which has more than 4000 followers. In using social media, numbers of followers who following our account is important. By having more followers, library has better opportunity to keep user update and see what library posts.

In respect to the 1st research questions, “*What profile picture do libraries use on Instagram?*” it is recognized that 3 of 5 libraries use “library building photograph”, “library building silhouette” and “library logo” for their profile picture. Two others use poster of “World Book Day” and “I Love Library” as their profile pictures. By using a profile photo depicting the library, it conveys the message that social media account is owned by the library. All libraries also display a clear profile description regarding their accounts and give the URL link to the library website. Conner (2017) stated the profile description of social media accounts tell visitors about who we are, what we are about and what the followers can expect to see if they follow our account.

Researchers then checked the other social media platforms used by all respondent libraries. Based on the findings, it is found that 3 of five libraries use different kind of profile pictures for another social media platforms. It is assumed that libraries use two type of profile pictures: constantly and temporarily profile pictures. Profile picture is a form of non verbal communication which tells public about who we are. Mon (2015) stated that social media profiles typically include a mixture of personal pictures and biographical text, which raises questions of “impression management” in terms of how a library should ideally be representing its “self ” in social sites. Afterall, Mon (2015) also explained that practices in managing library social site profiles are constantly changing. Many libraries then changing their social profile banner images to commemorate events. Each social media accounts (in different platform) owned by the library should be consistently used the same profile photo or logo.

## **B. Posting schedule**

The second research question was “*How do libraries keeping update their posts on Instagram?, what style of language do they use?*” The result shows that 4 of 5 libraries updated regularly their accounts, with average post 1-4 times a week. Type of content mostly a poster or infographic and short video. Optimizing the libraries’ social media accounts will succeed the marketing goals. Garofalo (2013) recommends that academic library social media should post updates at least twice a week. Libraries can add as well as update photos or videos as events happen. Therefore, the libraries need to keep their accounts frequently and consistently updated. King (2015) stated that *lack of posting consistency is another major reason why many library social media channels struggle to gain followers and engagement*. Further, King (2015, p. 17) also suggested that the easiest way to fix posting inconsistency is to simply schedule the task of posting: if the library’s goal is to post once a day just schedule that task in the calendar.

## **C. Type of information posted on Instagram**

Regarding to the third research question, “*What type of information do the libraries post on Instagram?*” Researchers then observed Instagram posts of the libraries during observation time (April 1st – May 7th, 2018). There were 86 instagram posts identified. Majority posts were

images and posters (71 posts), while total video posted on their accounts are 15 posts.

**Table 1. Total posts identified**

| <b>Instagram Account</b> | <b>Total posts</b> | <b>Types</b>               |
|--------------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|
| Library “A”              | 6 posts            | All images and posters     |
| Library “B”              | 28 posts           | Videos, images and posters |
| Library “C”              | 38 posts           | Videos, images and posters |
| Library “D”              | 3 posts            | All posters                |
| Library “E”              | 11 posts           | Videos, images and posters |

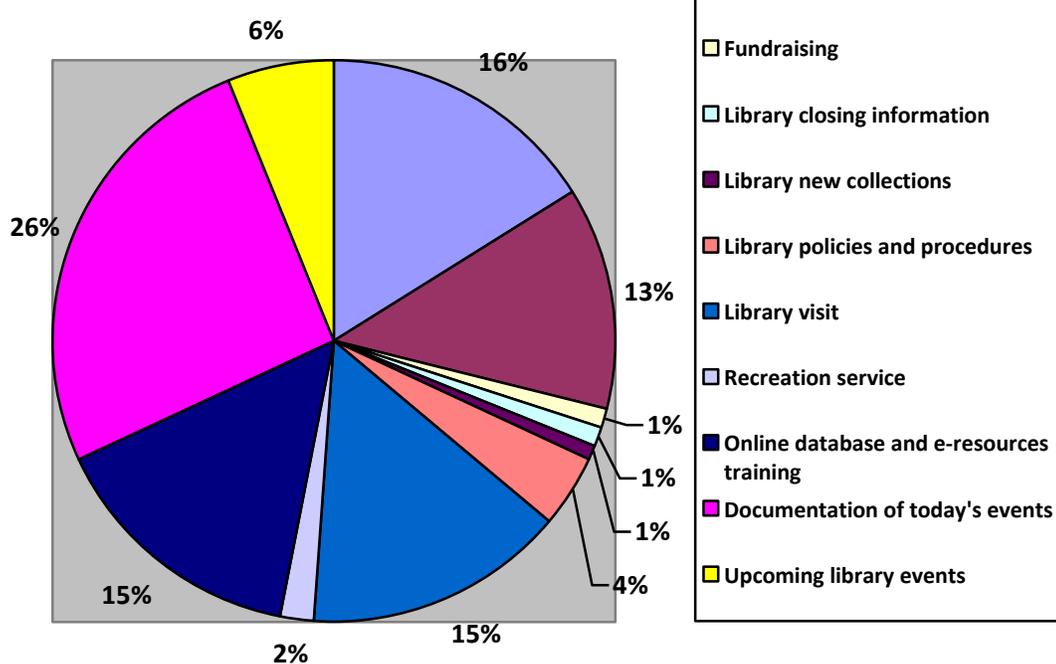
The results then categorized into 11 type of information posted on Instagram by the libraries. The categories were adapted from Al-Daihani and AlAwadhi (2015). The categories are comprises: commemorate days; greeting the users; fundraising; library closing information; library new collections; library policies and procedures; library visit; recreation service, online database and e-resources training; today’s events and upcoming library events. Table 2 below is detailed description of total identified posts.

**Table 2. Information posted on Instagram**

| <b>Type of Information</b>               | <b>Total posts</b> |
|--|--------------------|
| Commemorate days                         | 14                 |
| Greeting the users                       | 11                 |
| Fundraising                              | 1                  |
| Library closing information              | 1                  |
| Library new collections                  | 1                  |
| Library policies and procedures          | 3                  |
| Library visit                            | 13                 |
| Recreation service                       | 2                  |
| Online database and e-resources training | 13                 |
| Documentation of today’s events          | 22                 |
| Upcoming library events                  | 5                  |
| <b>Total posts identified</b>            | <b>86</b>          |

Based on the table above, researchers then made percentage of each type information posted on Instagram. The percentage is presentedd on Figure 1.

**Diagram 1. Percentage of Information Posted on Instagram**



**Figure 1. Percentage of information posted on Instagram**

Figure 1 shows that libraries have mainly posted to share everything library-related with total percentage 38 percent, which consist of library closing information (1%), library new collections (1%), library policies and procedures (4%), library visit (15%), recreation service (2%), online database and e-resources training (15%). On the second sequence, it is identified that libraries posted about upcoming (6%) and documentation of today’s events (26%) with total percentage 32 percent. On the third and fourth sequence, libraries posted regarding commemorate days (16%) and to build community by greeting the users (13%). The last sequence, only 1 post which related to the fundraising (1%).

This finding seems in line with Garofalo’s study which conducted survey towards 157 academic librarians. Garofalo (2013) presented result that the most popular use of social media in an academic library is to share anything library-related (90.4%), while the second and third popular use include advertising services (80.3%) and marketing library events (79%). However, only 43 percent of respondents had used social media to build a community, while 23.6 percent used social media to encourage registration in library courses (Garofalo, 2013). Social media like Instagrams allow users to always get engaged with the library without having to come physically

to the library. Promotion through social media can save the library budget and deliver information widely without being limited by time and distance.

According to the style of language use by the libraries, 3 of 5 libraries use formal language for every posts on Instagram. The other 2 libraries use formal and informal language for their posts and response to users. The libraries sometimes use english in their posts. Total posts identified in Indonesian language were 64 posts and English were 12 posts. The posts usually completed by hashtags (#) relating to the contents. For example, *#bookfair* (upcoming library events) and *#harikartini* (commemorate days). Total hashtags identified for 86 posts were 319 hashtags, with average hashtags for each post is 4 (four) hashtags. The most hashtag used were 'library', 'academic library names', and 'university names'. Indonesian language (Bahasa Indonesia) and English were also used for hashtags. The use of hashtags of libraries is considered effective and beneficial to expose the library to the targeted users. However, further research on hashtags use by the academic libraries need to be conducted to identify how the libraries apply hashtags in their posts.

Findings that libraries try to build community by posting pictures and videos for greeting the users is identified as a good signal. Xie and Stevenson (2014) defined that *social media is a means of communication through the Internet that enables social interaction*. Social interaction happens with two way communications. By greeting the users through social media, it is expected that libraries could build community in social media.

Garofalo (2013, pp. 30-31) explained,

*“Community-building on social media involves connections. These connections can include conversations where ideas and thoughts are exchanged.”*

(Garofalo, 2013, p. 30)

*“ A commitment to sustain social media networking conversations requires resources. These resources include, for example, staff time to develop the postings for the conversations and time to interact and cultivate the connections that can lead to a community presence.”*

(Garofalo, 2013, p. 30)

*“Sometimes asking a question is a way to start a conversation. You can practice this in any social media context – blogs, Facebook, etc. When someone posts on social media, ask them for more details, or why they feel that way. You will have the opportunity to start to build a relationship as you learn more about the topic as well as about that person. This concept can then be brought into the library’s social media efforts. The library should be open to receiving comments and always responding to what is shared.”*

At this point, it is not just enough for libraries to posts only for greeting users, but also should respond to their users in social media.

#### D. Interaction with user

Regarding to the pattern and interaction between libraries and users on Instagram, it is identified that interaction between libraries and users is considered limited. Only two of five libraries which seems to respond comments and questions from users. The libraries responded to user regarding questions about service hours and specific collections.

**Table 3. Comments on Instagram Accounts**

| <b>Instagram Account</b> | <b>Total Comments</b> | <b>Responds to Users</b> |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| Library "A"              | 2 comments            | -                        |
| Library "B"              | 5 comments            | -                        |
| Library "C"              | 6 comments            | 2 responses              |
| Library "D"              | -                     | -                        |
| Library "E"              | 57 comments           | 4 responses              |

Unfortunately, researchers were not able to identify interaction built through personal message sent by users to the library. Conner (2017) revealed spending time commenting on posts within the community and on target clients is important. By responding to user comments and complaints, then the user will feel appreciated and understood. Therefore, social media encourages and expects two-way communication, not just 'tell something' in the absence of interaction.

In addition, 4 of 5 libraries also using emoticons and emoji while posting or interacting with users. The use of emoticons and emoji "smile" while responding or interacting with users convey the impression of enthusiastic and happy. Stark and Crawford (2015) explained that the emoji are popular digital pictograph that can appear in text messages, emails, and on social media platforms. These characters are generally understood as a lighthearted, almost comedic form of communication, but they have a rich and complex socioeconomic history that precedes the range of mobile devices where they commonly appear (Stark & Crawford, 2015). Emoji and emoticons helps the librarian to connect emotionally and maintaining social ties with users in the digital environment.

#### Conclusion

The analysis revealed that libraries mostly used Instagram as online marketing tool to inform their users about library-related things and events. However, as explained before, optimizing the libraries' social media accounts will succeed the marketing goals. This study suggests the libraries

need to update their posts regularly.

This study recommends libraries should consider carefully when choosing the profile picture that represents their image and brand. The libraries' strategy to pick representative profile picture such as library logo or building photographs is considered as good strategy to reflect library's brand. It is also important to keep the design of profile pictures as consistent as possible. This study also suggests library to keep the same profile picture across platforms.

The findings also reveal that all libraries provide a brief and accurate description regarding their accounts as well as displaying the URL link to the library website. Brief description of library's profile should be informative and easy to read. Along with that, accurate URL link to the library website allows users to explore more about the resources, programs and services provided by the library. However, libraries need to develop and maintain interactive communication with users in online environment. According to Garofalo (2013), *social media conversations provide opportunities for interactions with community members at the point in time when they have an interest or a question, rather than whenever they happen to call, visit, or email the library.* Hence, it is good for the library to take the opportunity of engaging users.

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