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Reaching Users Through Social Media: A Case Study on the Use of Instagram by Islamic Higher Education Libraries in Indonesia

Objective. This research aims to identify the use of social media by Indonesian Islamic Higher Education Libraries to communicate with their users through their regular postings on Instagram and the users' responses to them. **Methods.** This research applies quantitative methods to uncover data concerning the number of Instagram posts made by State Islamic University (UIN) libraries and the users' responses (i.e. *like*, *comment*, *share*, and *save*), and then analyzes them using a qualitative approach to identify the users' responses. **Results.** UIN libraries reach users by posting information related to libraries on Instagram that can be classified into eight types of posts; greetings, announcements, library promotions, book donations, quotes, and others. The number of responses to these types of posts varies from each library but posting information related to library services will invite most responses from library users. The library of *UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta* is the most active library in posting information on Instagram. **Conclusion.** Instagram is a good medium to reach library users in UIN libraries. However, the availability of policies regarding the use of Instagram in the library is needed since it influences the number of posts on Instagram. Timing (i.e. when is the best time to make an Instagram post?) is also important since it makes a post get more responses.

Keywords: social media; Instagram; academic library; Islamic higher education

Introduction

In the early development of information technology, the internet and computers, for so many institutions, are considered to be the most important tools for doing their main activities, including communication. For some reason, the rise of social media is also considered to have changed the way people communicate with each other. Nowadays information can be easily shared and accepted throughout the world (Oyetola, Aderibigbe, & Oladokun, 2023). As a tool to connect humans with humans, social media is a set of technology that makes two-way communication possible (Koulouris, Vraimaki, & Koloniari, 2020). It, therefore, can be effectively used for supporting institutional activities. Further, the development of the internet and information technology has caused a trend to adopt various internet-based systems, tools, and applications, including social media, for doing promotion activities, and also for learning activities (Lam, Ho, & Chiu, 2023). Social media channels contribute to propagating materials on a global scale (Lee, 2019). Although social media is basically a communication platform, in its development, it is also used for various purposes, like information sharing, promotion/marketing, even for politic campaign (Gunitsky, 2015). This situation is also shown in some researches, for example, research on the use of social media for political purposes in Croatia (Bagić Babac & Podobnik, 2018) and India which encourage reluctant teenagers to participate in the discussions of social, economic, and political issues (Amoncar, 2020). In more or less the same way, research done in Indonesia also shows the important role of social media with its valid information in encouraging millennial generation to take part in political issues discussions (Hamid, Abror, Anwar, & Hartati, 2022). In the world of business, social media platform is taken as opportunity to build efficient relationship with customers (Chuang, 2019). Social media platform is also used in the world of health, like

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what is done in China during the Covid-19 pandemic era, in which it is helpful to restrict the spread of corona virus (Koulouris et al., 2020).

In the world of education, a great number of educational institutions also make use of social media. In China, various types of library use social media to promote library services and resources (Xin & Yingxi, 2022). Meanwhile, many Indonesian universities use social media for many purposes, such as promoting library accesses and services (Prisca Cahyani & Asri, 2018), getting library users informed of the new source and material, sharing information about the library, socializing the library programs, library campaign, and sharing information of social and cultural activities (Suharso & Pramesti, 2020). Social media even help students with up-to-date information which is not related to library services (Chizwina, Rabatseta, Bangani, & Moyo, 2017). In addition, social media can also be used by a library to find out learning outcomes, to examine how the information shared in social media helps students learn better, on the assumption that a library is always concerned with information useful for students (Lam et al., 2023).

In the Covid-19 pandemic era, when most countries enact lockdown policies, many educational institutions, including academic libraries, use social media for communicating with their users. As we know, during the pandemic era, while they need library accesses for finishing their assignments, these users (students) cannot access onsite library services and collections. This is the reason why social media usage increases during the pandemic era, as can be seen in research on the use of Instagram by Library of UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta (Marwiyah, Labibah, Sri, & Khusnul, 2021). Social media is a solution for facing “crisis moment” caused by the Covid-19 attack. As Erikson (Eriksson, 2018) says, social media has appeared to be an effective tool for risk and crisis communication in disaster, emergency situation. Social media also enable libraries to provide user-centric innovative services (Chiparausha, Onyancha, & Ezema, 2022). Social media also is potential tool to build effective relationship with customers as implemented in business sector (Chuang, 2019). As institutions to provide collection and information services, libraries also use social media for reaching their users and for promoting their services (Anwar & Zhiwei, 2020; Koulouris et al., 2020). There have been many studies dealings with this issue of how social media is used in a library to reach its users (Muhammad & Zhiwei, 2021; Oyetola et al., 2023). All this shows that social media can be used by libraries for reaching their users.

Seeing how social media is used during Covid-19 era, it is also important to identify the use of social media in the post-Covid-19 era, when academic activities, including library services, have been back to normal. Some questions raise; do libraries still use social media for reaching their users? do users still use social media as a means to get information and access library services? This research is aimed at seeing how Islamic Higher Education Libraries use social media to reach their users as well as to assist them to find out information in order that they stay connected to the libraries and benefit from the information posted in the libraries’ Instagram accounts, by seeing the users’ responses to the Instagram posts. Instagram is chosen here because Instagram, according to the survey of *We Are Social* (2023), appears to be the second most used platform (86,5%) after *WhatsApp* (92,1%) in Indonesia.

Methods

This research is intended to find out how Instagram is used as a means of communication between a library and its users. Many researches have been done on this theme using various approaches: 1) quantitative Big Data approach, 2) digital humanities approach such as cultural analytics that seek to make greater use of Instagram’s rich data, 3) small samples of Instagram data paired with qualitative approach such as content analysis, and 4) direct engagement with Instagram users themselves through interviews and ethnographic work (McIntosh, 2019). The approach used

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in this research is small samples of Instagram data paired with qualitative approaches because this research does not only use quantitative data, but also sees the users' responses to the Instagram posts and interpret them quantitatively as well as qualitatively.

The Instagram accounts to be researched are the Instagram accounts of State Islamic University Libraries with greatest followers, they are, the Instagram account of Library of UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta (UIN Yogyakarta) with 22.300 followers, *Library of UIN Syarif Hidayatullah* Jakarta (UIN Jakarta) with 13.500 followers, and Library of UIN Syarifuddin Zuhri Purwokerto (UIN Purwokerto) with 10.200 followers. The technique of data gathering used in this research is observation on Instagram posts and users' responses to them. The researchers will look at the Instagram posts made during one academic year (2022-2023) that starts from July 2022 to June 2023. This is the academic year in which teaching-learning activities and library services have been completely back to normal with its onsite and night services. The information to be observed is the sort of information posted in Instagram by the libraries and how the users respond to them through: *like, comment, share* and *save*.

Result and Discussion

The data on the use of Instagram in the three UIN libraries are divided into two big parts, they are, data of Instagram posts and users' responses to them on monthly basis and data of content-based users' responses.

1. Users' responses to the Instagram posts taken on monthly basis

As each library makes its own policy on how to use social media for sharing information of library activities, the use of Instagram by these three libraries affects differently, in term of Instagram usage pattern, number of posts, and responses given by the users. This can be seen in Table 1, Table 2, and Table 3 below. These tables show that these three libraries use Instagram in different intensity. Concerning the use of Instagram, Library of UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta runs a policy that it makes an Instagram post on daily basis with information content as planned for each day. In addition, the library also makes Instagram contents based on the university academic schedule. As a result, this library uses Instagram more intensively in some particular months. This can be seen in the Table 1 below, which shows that in January, the library's Instagram post reaches its highest number, that is, 32 posts. This is because January is a month when students make preparation for graduation, like uploading their last assignments, which is a condition to fulfill their graduation requirements. For doing this, they need relevant information which is made available in Instagram by the library. Consequently, the users' response also reaches its highest number, that is, 6.582 *likes* and 108 *comments*. May is another month when students are busy with graduation preparation. In this month, the number of users' responses is also high, reaching 8.480 *likes* and 135 *comments*. Generally speaking, however, the users make positive responses to the 339 posts in this academic year, with 68.906 *likes* and 804 *comments*, 2.490 *shares*, and 5.992 *saves*.

Table 1

**Per Month Data of Instagram Posts and Users' Responses
Library of UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta**

	Jul-22	Aug-22	Sep-22	Oct-22	Nov-22	Dec-22	Jan-23	Feb-23	Mar-23	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Total
Post	29	29	29	30	26	28	32	30	30	21	29	26	339
Like	3.322	6.528	5.943	6.437	7.305	8.390	6.582	4.685	5.904	1.942	8.480	3.388	68.906
Comment	9	73	30	35	63	120	108	55	88	56	135	32	804
Share	108	336	175	150	152	542	178	155	232	55	282	125	2.490
Save	397	1.410	336	460	313	952	145	316	703	133	369	458	5.992
Total	3.836	8.347	6.484	7.082	7.833	10.004	7.013	5.211	6.927	2.186	9.266	4.003	78.192

In the meantime, Library of UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta does not make specific policy on the use of Instagram, so its use of Instagram for sharing information is based on demands. Nevertheless, its users make responses to its 339 Instagram posts, with 18.000 *likes*, 3 *comments*, 356 *shares*, and 428 *saves*. As can be seen in the following Table 2, the users do not make significant comments. The posts from July 2022 to March 2023 do not even get any comment. Overall, however, the users are active enough to make responses in the forms of share and save.

Table 2

**Per Month Data of Instagram Posts and Users' Responses
Library of UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta**

	Jul-22	Aug-22	Sep-22	Oct-22	Nov-22	Dec-22	Jan-23	Feb-23	Mar-23	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Total
Post	10	4	8	1	12	5	11	5	9	8	18	23	114
Like	749	851	1.467	68	1.544	533	2.495	675	2.984	1.752	2.207	2.675	18.000
Comment	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	3
Share	23	88	9	0	21	2	62	12	56	13	45	25	356
Save	14	43	17	0	27	2	216	1	39	16	29	24	428
Total	786	982	1.493	68	1.592	537	2.773	688	3.079	1.782	2.282	2.725	18.787

Library of UIN Purwokerto makes a policy on the use of Instagram that the library makes Instagram posts only for sharing announcement, on the assumption that important information will easily reach the users when it is shared in Instagram. Therefore, all of the Instagram posts made by this library contain announcement, with some additional posts of greetings for big days. This is the reason why this library does not make so many Instagram posts, as can be seen in the following Table 3. Despite its limited posts, numbering 29 posts only, the users make good enough responses, with 6814 *likes*, 26 *comments*, and 211 *saves*.

Table 3

**Per Month Data of Instagram Posts and Users' Responses
Library of UIN Purwokerto**

	Jul-22	Aug-22	Sep-22	Oct-22	Nov-22	Dec-22	Jan-23	Feb-23	Mar-23	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Total
Post	4	5	4	2	6	0	0	0	0	0	2	6	29
Like	749	504	1577	418	2070	0	0	0	0	0	734	762	6814
Comment	3	1	13	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	5	26
Share	5	6	45	4	11	0	0	0	0	0	9	13	93
Save	13	12	117	0	44	0	0	0	0	0	16	9	211
Total	774	528	1756	425	2133	0	0	0	0	0	762	795	7173

Library of UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta appears to be the most active library to make Instagram posts, reaching 339 posts. Library of UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta is in the second position, with 114 posts, followed by Library of UIN Purwokerto in the third position with 29 posts. This has something to do with the policies made by each library. Referring to the academic calendar, Library of UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta makes regular Instagram posts with relevant contents. It is no wonder that this library appears to be the most active library to make Instagram posts and consequently have most responses from its users.

2. Content Based Users' Responses

The Instagram posts contents of each library varies and based on Instagram account of the three libraries, we found that posts made by the three libraries can be classified into eight sorts of post:

- 1) Greeting (for example, greeting for big days, graduation, etc.);
- 2) Announcement, that is, short information of daily library activities, like service hours, library activities, etc.;
- 3) Library Promotion (library activities and collections);
- 4) Library visit, that is, a documentation made when another institution makes a library visit;
- 5) Library activities (webinar, user education, etc.);
- 6) Book gift, that is, a documentation made when an academician or writer donates books for library collection;
- 7) Quotes taken from inspiring figures;
- 8) Others, that is a post content beyond these seven categories.

Library of UIN Purwokerto uses Instagram specifically for sharing announcements and this is a part of policy concerning the use of Instagram. While, the other two libraries use it for various purposes. As can be seen in the Table 4 below, Library of UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta very often makes posts for the purpose of promotion, reaching 100 posts, and get most responses from the users, reaching 31.854 responses, consisting of 25.809 *likes*, 392 *comments*, 1.157 *shares*, and 4.496 *saves*. The posts of collection, like the manual to access library collections and how to upload last assignments to the library web, appear to be the most responded posts. This is because this sort of information is really important for the students as it is closely related to their learning processes, pushing them to interact with the librarians for clearer information. The posts containing announcement are also highly responded by the users, reaching 10.756 responses, because these

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posts give the users information of service hours change, new services, and even volunteer recruitment, which is interesting for the users.

Table 4

Content Based Users' Responses (Library of UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta)

Types of Response	Content of the Post								Total
	Greeting	Announcement	Promotion	Library Visit	Library Activities	Book Gift	Quote	Others	
Post	59	51	100	44	48	27	8	2	339
Like	9.938	14.460	25.809	6.915	7.949	4.281	1.301	163	70.816
Comment	62	223	392	50	53	20	2	2	804
Share	121	950	1.157	81	104	45	30	2	2.490
Save	55	1.123	4.496	46	159	50	57	6	5.992
Total	10.176	16.756	31.854	7.092	8.265	4.396	1.390	173	80.102

In the case of Library of UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, the most responded post is that of greeting, reaching 5.495 responses, consisting of 5.389 likes, 69 shares, and 37 saves, no comment is made. The posts of promotion are in the fourth place, with 2.822 responses. Interestingly, the number of saves is the highest number, that is, 281. Similar to what happens to Library of UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, the posts of promotion interest the users because they are packed in the forms of video or info graphic, containing steps to access electronic collections, which are so important for their learning processes that they make responses with *share* or *save*.

Table 5

Content Based Users' Responses (Library of UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta)

Types of Users' Responses	Content of the Post								Total
	Greeting	Announcement	Promotion	Library Visit	Library Activities	Book Gift	Quote	Others	
Post	26	16	16	20	33	4	0	0	115
Like	5.389	2.384	2.380	3.014	4.496	344	0	0	18.007
Comment	0	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	3
Share	69	63	161	11	55	4	0	0	363
Save	37	52	281	21	32	4	0	0	427
Total	5.495	2.500	2.822	3.046	4.585	352	0	0	18.800

In the meantime, Library of State Islamic University Purwokerto, which makes Instagram posts only for sharing announcement and greeting, also gets good enough responses from the users. They make responses with *likes*, *comments*, *shares*, and *saves*. For the post of greeting, they make 2.667 responses, outnumbering the responses for the post of announcement, which is 2.403. This is rather surprising, actually, because information contained in the post of greeting is not really important for the students, compared with that of announcement, which may contain emergency information, like information that the library is out of service. All this, however, indicates that the

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users are basically active users who seek library information by accessing the library's Instagram account.

Table 6

Content Based Users' Responses (Library of State Islamic University Purwokerto)

Sort of Users' Responses	Content of the Post								Total
	Greeting	Announcement	Promotion	Library visit	Library Activities	Book Gift	Quote	Others	
Post	10	13	6	0	0	0	0	0	29
Like	2.641	2.302	1.870	0	0	0	0	0	6.813
Comment	6	7	13	0	0	0	0	0	26
Share	12	36	45	0	0	0	0	0	93
Save	8	58	145	0	0	0	0	0	211
Total	2.667	2.403	2.073	0	0	0	0	0	7.143

To compare the number of posting on Instagram and the responses that library users make in three UIN libraries we can see the table 7 below.

Table 7

No		UIN Yogyakarta	UIN Jakarta	UIN Purwokerto
1	Posting	339	114	29
2	Like	68.906	18.000	6.814
3	Comment	804	3	26
4	Share	2.490	354	93
5	Save	5.992	428	211
	Total Response	78.192	18.785	7.144
	Average rate	230	164	246

The table 7 above shows that Library of UIN Yogyakarta is the most active library in terms of posting information on Instagram compared to other two libraries. The highest number of posts makes the highest number of users' responses. In fact, it is not surprising, since the library of UIN Yogyakarta has policy on the use of social media to interact with users, primarily to post information related to library activities and library promotion. They, even, have schedule to post information on Instagram based on content and time (when to post and what to post). To implement the policy, the library of UIN Yogyakarta assigns two librarians to take responsibility to manage social media including making posts on Instagram regularly. In the case of UIN Jakarta, library staff will share information on Instagram only when they have library activities (such as user education) and important days like national days or graduation. Basically, they do not have a certain pattern or plan to post information on Instagram and consequently they only have few posts on Instagram. Meanwhile in UIN Purwokerto, the library has the policy concerning the use of social media by limiting the post only to announce important information for users and sharing information on the library activities and promotion on the library website. As the result, the library of UIN Purwokerto has the least number of posts. However, the users enthusiastically response

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the posts as shown on table 7 on the average rate of the users' response in which UIN Purwokerto occupies the highest place with 246 responses. This shows that Instagram is a potential tool to reach library users as well as to promote library. Therefore, it is recommended for UIN Jakarta and UIN Purwokerto to manage the social media in more effective way to reach their users as UIN Yogyakarta has implemented by providing policy on the use of social media to promote library collections and services and applying the policy consistently.

Conclusion

Instagram is one of the important tools used by UIN libraries to reach their users through posting information for library users ranging from general information like greeting to information related to library promotion (library collections and services) and announcements. This research shows that library users respond to Instagram posts by giving like, comment, share and save mainly for information related to library services and access to collections. Instagram also enables librarians to build good communication with users. Therefore, it is important for library to have policies related to the use of Instagram or other social media platform consisting the schedule and the content of information to be posted on Instagram since timing (when is the best time to make an Instagram post) has impact on the number of post and response from users as indicated in this research.

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Робота з користувачами через соціальні мережі: тематичне дослідження про використання Instagram ісламськими бібліотеками вищої освіти в Індонезії

Мета. Це дослідження має на меті визначити, як ісламські бібліотеки закладів вищої освіти Індонезії використовують соціальні медіа для комунікації зі своїми користувачами через регулярні публікації в Instagram та реакцію користувачів на них. **Методика.** У цьому дослідженні застосовано кількісні методи для виявлення даних щодо кількості постів в Instagram, зроблених бібліотеками UIN, та реакції користувачів (тобто лайки, коментарі, поширення та збереження), а потім проаналізовано їх за допомогою якісного підходу, щоб визначити реакцію користувачів на них. **Результати.** Бібліотеки UIN залучають користувачів через публікацію інформації про бібліотеки в Instagram, яку можна класифікувати на вісім типів постів: привітання, оголошення, бібліотечні акції, дарування книг, цитати та інші. Кількість відповідей на ці типи постів варіюється від бібліотеки до бібліотеки, але публікація інформації, пов'язаної з бібліотечними послугами, викликає найбільше відповідей від користувачів бібліотеки. Бібліотека UIN Сунан Каліджага в Джок'якарті є найактивнішою бібліотекою з розміщення інформації в Instagram. **Висновок.** Інстаграм є гарним засобом для охоплення користувачів бібліотек UIN. Однак необхідна наявність політики щодо використання Instagram в бібліотеці, оскільки вона впливає на кількість постів в Instagram. Вибір часу (тобто, коли найкращий час для публікації в Instagram?) також важливий, оскільки він сприяє отриманню більшої кількості відповідей на допис.

Ключові слова: соціальні медіа; Instagram; академічна бібліотека; ісламська вища освіта

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