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ACADEMIC LIBRARY ON FACEBOOK: A NARRATIVE REVIEW OF SCIENTIFIC LITERATURE PUBLISHED BETWEEN 2004 AND 2022

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KEY WORDS: Facebook. Academic library. Library on Facebook. Social media. SM marketing. Information behavior.

ABSTRACT: **Thesis/Objective –** This narrative review aims to synthesize and analyze the existing body of research concerning using Facebook (Fb) by academic libraries. **Method –** By conducting a comprehensive examination of 23 studies published between 2004 and 2022, this review identifies trends, research methods, and key findings in the field. The studies are categorized into three groups based on their methodologies: content analysis, surveys/interviews, and mixed methods. **Results** highlight the advantages of Fb in academic libraries, emphasizing tailored strategies, quality content, and adaptability to user preferences for improved communication and marketing. Additionally, Fb proves effective in facilitating communication, promoting library services, and gathering user feedback. **Conclusion –** This review identifies research gaps and provides insights for future studies, indicating Fb's value in academic library settings.

INTRODUCTION

The authors of the article "A review of Facebook research in social sciences" identified three main reasons why Facebook (Fb) is significant in terms of social sciences. Firstly, actions taken on Fb such as making connections, expressing preferences, and updating statuses leave behind traces in the form of observable data. This platform allows for the study of human behavior, which was previously difficult to examine. Fb can be treated as a constantly replenished database, and due to the platform's popularity in various countries and among different demographic groups, it offers a unique source of information about user behaviors. Therefore, one can study issues such as ways of making acquaintances, communicating identity, or spreading social networks (Wilson, Gosling & Graham, 2012).

The second reason arises from Fb's enormous popularity. According to available data, Facebook has achieved the distinction of being the first social media platform to surpass one billion registered accounts globally, with a current active user base of over 2.9 billion individuals per month, a number that continues to ascend (Dixon, 2023; Mixbloom, 2023). While it is true that younger demographics have exhibited a predilection for platforms such as TikTok and Snapchat, which resonate more with the Millennial cohort (Mixbloom, 2023), as of January 2023, a comprehensive demographic analysis has revealed that the primary user constituency on Fb comprises individuals between the ages of 25 and 34, constituting 29.9% of the global user population, with a gender distribution of 17.6% male and 12.3% female. Additionally, the second most prominent user cohort on Fb was individuals aged 18 to 24, constituting 21.5% of the total user base (Dixon, 2023). The inference to be drawn is that libraries should be mindful of the significant user demographic and consider their needs when creating content[1]. This still makes Fb itself a subject of scientific re-

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[1] See Lubińska A. (2021). TikTok jako instrument komunikacji marketingowej bibliotek, *Przegląd Biblioteczny*, 89(4). (accessed: 21.08.2023) ojs.sbp.pl/index.php/pb/article/view/877.

search, as in addition to reflecting existing social processes, it is also a place where many new ones emerge that change the way hundreds of millions of people relate to each other and share information. Although some commentators believe that Fb is disconnected from the real world, for many people living in industrialized societies, it has become a fundamental element of daily life. As a result, online and offline worlds have been at least partially integrated (Lampe, Ellison & Steinfield, 2016, cited in Wilson et al, 2012 p. 205).

Thirdly, the growing popularity of Fb and its integration with daily life bring new benefits and risks for society, such as issues of privacy and information disclosure. These new situations are monitored and studied for the positive and negative effects that the platform has on society (Wilson et al, 2012).

It is worth adding that analyzing the history of literature in a research context, particularly when investigating the operation of academic libraries on social media platforms like Fb, is essential. It allows researchers to gain valuable insights into best practices, identify trends, contribute to knowledge sharing, and pinpoint areas for improvement. This historical perspective offers lessons from past experiences, keeps those responsible for managing library Fb pages updated with advancements, encourages collaboration, and highlights potential focus areas for ongoing research and library management.

METHOD

Collecting materials for the narrative literature review described in this article consisted of an author-initiated search conducted using the Library Information Science & Technology Abstracts (LISTA) database and the catalogs of the Main Library of Nicolaus Copernicus University in Torun (NCU ML). The objective of this search was to locate scientific publications discussing the presence of academic libraries on Fb, considering online publications worldwide within the time spanning from 2004 (since the creation of Fb) to the end of 2022. The sources were selected based on their reputation and comprehensiveness in library science, information technology, and scholarly research.

LISTA database is a well-known and established library and information science resource, including scholarly articles, conference proceedings, books, and book reviews. Hence, it is a practical resource for identifying relevant research articles on the activities of libraries on Fb. Similarly, NCU ML is a respected institution that provides access to various scholarly materials and electronic resources. NCU ML offers a comprehensive search function that enables users to explore its collection and the combined catalogs of other academic libraries in Poland, including the National Library.

Additionally, NCU ML provides access to a range of electronic resources, such as Academic Search Ultimate (EBSCOhost), Elsevier ScienceDirect Journals Complete, and the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ), which were used to expand the search beyond the LISTA database and identify relevant research articles on the topic of libraries on Fb published in peer-reviewed journals.

The catalogs of NCU ML and other academic libraries were deemed valuable resources in identifying relevant research articles on libraries on Fb published in peer-reviewed journals. Thus, searching these catalogs enabled the identification.

Identifying pertinent research articles regarding library activities on Fb involved conducting searches in the LISTA and NCU ML databases, employing specific criteria. The search criteria encompassed the logical term/ phrase "academic library" alongside the keyword "Facebook." Furthermore, the selected articles must be available online and published between 2004 and 2022 in peer-reviewed journals and periodicals. Additionally, only articles written in English were considered within the search results to guarantee the inclusion of high-quality and pertinent research articles regarding libraries on Fb.

The bibliographic data, including abstracts, keywords and DOI or links, were exported to MS Excel, where a table was created. It contained columns: title, author, bibliographic details, abstract, keywords, language, and DOI or link to the full text. Relevant information was entered into the respective columns.

A total of 121 articles were found. Subsequently, the articles were analyzed and assessed to determine if they met the following three criteria. Firstly, articles had to pertain to academic libraries. Secondly, they were required to investigate of Fb. In cases where other SM platforms were also examined, the research related to Fb had to be distinctly separated. Thirdly, the selected articles had to be published in academic journals that underwent peer review or were presented as conference materials subjected to peer review.

OVERVIEW OF SELECTED STUDIES

Twenty-three publications were selected for analysis. The earliest published article meeting all criteria dates back to the year 2007. Consequently, the chronological scope of the analyzed publications spans from 2007 to 2022 and most of the articles were published in 2014 (n = 05). The overview of the included studies is presented in Table 1. It displays that majority of the studies (n = 13) were published collaboratively with two and more than two authors. Most articles concern libraries from the United States (n = 10).

Table 1. The overview of the analyzed studies

Authors	Year	Geographic Area	Area of interest	Method
Charnigo & Barnett-Ellis	2007	United States	126 academic librarians	Survey / Interview
Connell	2008	United States	Students at Valparaiso University	Survey / Interview
Hendrix et al.	2009	United States	Academic Health Sciences Libraries	Survey / Interview
Ayu & Abrizah	2011	Malaysia	25 academic libraries	Content analysis
Phillips	2011	United States	17 academic libraries	Content analysis
Aharony	2012	United States	Public and academic libraries	Content analysis
Walton	2013	United Kingdom	University of Sussex Library in Brighton	Content analysis
Giri, Kar & Bimal	2014	India	Indira Gandhi Delhi Technical University for Women Library	Content analysis
Palmer	2014	Australia	University library websites	Content analysis
Tan et al	2014	Asia Pacific region	82 Fb pages of university libraries	Content analysis
van Beynen & Swenson	2014	United States	Student-run Fb groups	Content analysis
Witte	2014	United States	28 academic libraries from Ohio, Indiana, and Kentucky	Content analysis
Kasperek & Messersmith	2015	United States	Mansfield University Library	Comprehensive Approach
Winn, Groenendyk & Rivosecchi	2015	Australia	The University of British Columbia	Survey / Interview
Chatten & Roughley	2016	United Kingdom	University of Liverpool	Content analysis
Al-Daihani & Abrahams	2018	Different countries	100 English-language universities according to the 2014 Shanghai World University Rankings	Content analysis
Peñaflor	2018	Philippines	University Libraries	Content analysis

Shaffer, Martin & Simpson	2018	United States	Troy University Libraries	Content analysis
Lesda, Gouldin & Lowe	2019	United States	University Libraries	Comprehensive Approach
Tyson et al	2019	New Zealand	University of Canterbury Library	Content analysis
Chan, Lam & Chiu	2020	Hong Kong	University of Hong Kong Libraries	Comprehensive Approach
Affum	2021	Ghana	Borsah Library Complex (Cape Coast Technical University) Main Library	Survey / Interview
Chi	2021	Vietnam	Four academic libraries in Ho Chi Minh City	Content analysis
Chi	2022	Vietnam	Students at four Vietnamese universities	Survey / Interview

Three main groups of articles can be distinguished based on the type of research conducted (Table 2). The first was titled "content analysis". This group includes fifteen texts in which the authors examined Fb pages regarding what is posted on them, how it is presented, and to whom it is directed. The second group, titled "Survey/Interview", contains six articles. The authors of these texts investigated the behavior and opinions of users and employees in the context of library pages on Fb. The final group comprised tree studies, for which a comprehensive research approach was undertaken, involving the application of both methods.

Table 2. Research Methods Employed in the Analyzed Articles

Used method	No. of articles	Research questions
Content analysis	15	How is information posted, presented, and directed to specific audiences?
Survey / Interview	6	What are the attitudes and behaviors of users and employees towards library Fb pages?
Comprehensive research approach	3	Both of the above questions.

RESULTS

A thorough examination of the texts of the researched articles was undertaken to uncover the primary discoveries and recommendations that underpin this section. Following the categorization of thematic areas, the results and suggestions were amalgamated to enable a comprehensive analysis of the articles. This method facilitated a holistic overview of the collective insights and proposals presented in the literature.

Regarding the findings extracted from the examined articles concerning the involvement of academic libraries on Fb, these can be categorized into the following thematic domains: (1) Perceptions of Facebook in Academic Libraries; (2) User Acceptance and Privacy Concerns; (3) Library Usage of Facebook; (4) Benefits of Facebook for Libraries.

Articles according to this division are discussed below. Then, after discussing the findings, recommendations are presented based on the authors' suggestions in the analyzed articles.

FINDINGS

Perceptions of Facebook in Academic Libraries

Perceptions of Fb in academic libraries can be mixed, with varying opinions among librarians. According to Hendrix et al. (2009), most librarians are aware of Fb's potential, but the extent to which they embrace it as a tool for their profession differs. Some librarians view Fb as a valuable tool for engaging with students and promoting library services. In contrast, others may perceive it as falling outside professional librarianship's scope, as Charnigo and Barnett-Ellis (2007) noted.

One of the factors influencing these differing perspectives is the concern about the appropriateness of Fb in academic settings. Questions about whether Fb aligns with the educational mission of libraries can impact its adoption. Privacy issues are another concern that can limit Fb usage in academic libraries. Librarians may worry about collecting and handling user data on the platform. Additionally, staff limitations, such as the availability of personnel to manage and maintain a Fb presence, can also shape perceptions of its utility within the academic library context (Aharony, 2012).

In summary, while Fb has the potential to be a valuable tool in academic libraries, varying perceptions among librarians exist, influenced by concerns about appropriateness, privacy, and staffing constraints. These factors contribute to the diverse viewpoints held within the academic library community regarding the role of Fb in their professional practice.

User Acceptance and Privacy Concerns

User acceptance and privacy concerns play a significant role in shaping the dynamics of library engagement, particularly in SM. As revealed in a study conducted by Chi (2022), respondents generally are willing to embrace library contact through platforms such as Fb. This openness reflects the evolving nature of information dissemination and user expectations in the digital age. However, it is crucial to acknowledge the nuanced landscape of user attitudes, as highlighted by Connell (2008). Some library users express valid privacy concerns regarding interactions through SM channels. These concerns underscore the need for libraries to strike a delicate balance between fostering user engagement and safeguarding individuals' privacy rights, thereby navigating the complex intersection of user acceptance and privacy considerations in the digital library landscape (Connell, 2008).

In summary, the interaction between user acceptance and privacy concerns in library engagement through SM is multifaceted. Users generally embrace library contact via SM. However, privacy concerns remain a significant consideration. Balancing user engagement and privacy protection is critical for libraries in the digital era.

Library Usage of Facebook

Libraries utilize Fb for various purposes, as highlighted in several studies. Firstly, Fb serves as a potent tool for library promotion, as noted by Tan et al. (2014). Furthermore, it serves as a platform for information dissemination, photo sharing, chat-based reference services, and maintaining a library's online presence, as emphasized by Tyson et al. (2019) and Hendrix et al. (2009). This comprehensive strategy enables libraries to establish effective connections with their audience.

Phillips (2011) underscores that Fb provides an interactive medium for libraries to engage with students and convey their identity and purpose. Through this platform, libraries can foster community and interaction with their patrons.

Additionally, research by Palmer (2014) identifies two primary forms of interaction on library Fb pages: comments on library posts and engagement with visual content. These interactions contribute to the overall engagement and outreach of library Fb pages.

Lastly, it's important to note that the frequency of posts on library Fb pages plays a significant role in determining the engagement rate. Regular and well-timed posts can enhance user interaction and participation on library Fb pages (Peñaflor, 2018; Chi, 2021).

In summary, libraries harness Fb for diverse purposes, from promotion to community engagement. The platform's interactivity and content stra-

tegies, as well as the frequency of posts, are key factors influencing the success of library Fb pages in reaching and connecting with their audiences.

Benefits of Facebook for Libraries

Fb has become a valuable platform for libraries to connect with their patrons and enhance their services. Several studies have highlighted the advantages of utilizing Fb for library outreach and engagement. First, Fb's immediacy, informality, and interactivity provide libraries with unique opportunities to shape their image and interact with students in a more approachable manner (Phillips, 2011). Users also perceive a library's Fb page as a convenient platform for communication, making it easier for patrons to seek assistance and stay updated on library news and events (Walton, 2013).

Moreover, Fb is an effective tool for marketing library services, building user relationships, and obtaining valuable feedback from the community (Tan et al., 2014; Chatten & Roughley, 2016). This engagement is exceptionally cost-effective, a critical consideration for resource-conscious institutions such as academic libraries. However, success on Fb requires careful attention to factors like collaboration, communication, timing, and diverse content creation (Giri, Kar & Bimal, 2014).

In addition to marketing and engagement, Fb is an excellent platform for promoting library collections, educating users, and attracting new readers (Affum, 2021). It is not limited to promotional activities; Fb can also be utilized as an educational tool by delivering information literacy content effectively (Winn, Groenendyk & Rivosecchi, 2015; Tyson et al., 2019).

In summary, Fb offers libraries many benefits, including the ability to shape their image, improve communication, engage users, and effectively promote their services and collections. When used strategically, Fb can be a powerful tool for libraries to fulfill their mission of providing information and education to their communities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the analysis of selected articles, several recommendations have emerged for libraries seeking to enhance their presence on SM platforms. Academic libraries, in particular, can benefit from these insights. Firstly, academic libraries should increase their posting frequency and employ visually engaging content (Al-Daihani & Abrahams, 2018; Shaffer, Martin & Simpson, 2018; Chan, Lam & Chiu, 2020). Furthermore, conducting surveys to understand user expectations better, as Chi (2021) advocates, can help libraries tailor their SM strategies.

To effectively connect with students, libraries should align their content with students' interests, utilize vivid visuals, incorporate unique fea-

tures, and encourage social interaction, as recommended by Chi (2022). Notably, the quality of content should take precedence over quantity, in line with findings from Tan et al. (2014) and Lam, Au, and Chiu (2014). The study underscores that successful SM practices for libraries hinge on comprehending the user base, making informed decisions, and ensuring continuity, especially during staff transitions, as Lesda, Gouldin, and Lowe (2019) noted.

User-generated informal and conversational content has been shown to generate more engagement, as Al-Daihani and Abrahams (2018) and Lam, Au, and Chiu (2014) emphasized. Libraries are encouraged to adopt an entertaining and interactive style on SM while sharing visually appealing content, as suggested by the same authors and Chan, Lam, and Chiu (2020). Furthermore, libraries should strategically harness advanced features such as live videos and hashtags while scheduling their posts to maximize their impact.

Researchers recommend avoiding controversial topics, as highlighted by Kasperek and Messersmith (2015) and Shaffer, Martin, and Simpson (2018). Well-prepared profile pictures and cover photos play a crucial role in establishing a positive online image, as indicated by Lam, Au, and Chiu (2014). Short video clips are particularly effective for engaging younger audiences. Lastly, libraries should balance creating their own content and sharing relevant content from external sources, as Witte (2014) suggested.

In summary, academic libraries can enhance their SM presence by following these recommendations, emphasizing the importance of user engagement, content quality, and strategic use of features while being mindful of their audience's preferences and expectations.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The limitations of this study encompass several aspects, including the choice of the database, language-based filtering, the search strategy employed, and the inclusion of only 23 studies in the review. Data extraction relied on two primary sources: LISTA database and the catalogs of NCU ML, which provides access to a range of electronic resources, such as Academic Search Ultimate, Elsevier ScienceDirect Journals Complete, and the Directory of Open Access Journals. Despite access to numerous databases, there remains a possibility that not all relevant articles have been located. Furthermore, despite the implementation of a rigorous search strategy, there is a possibility of missing certain studies due to disparities in keywords and a concentration on English-language publications.

CONCLUSION AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

This narrative review examined the literature published between 2004 (since the inception of Fb) and the end of 2022 on using Fb by academic libraries. After searching relevant databases and applying additional criteria, 23 studies were included in this review. These articles came from different countries. The chronological scope of the analyzed publications covers the years 2007–2022, and most of the articles were published in 2014 (n = 05). Most studies (n = 13) were published jointly with two or more authors. Most articles concern libraries from the United States (n = 10).

The materials analyzed in the study were categorized into three groups based on the research methods employed. The first category contains fifteen texts that use content analysis as a research method. This method is based on a systematic approach and interpretation of activity data in articles. The studies focused on several themes, including the use of SM by libraries, the impact of SM on information behavior, and the effectiveness of SM marketing by libraries.

Six articles were identified within the second group, and data was collected through surveys and interviews. These studies employed diverse survey and interview techniques to gather information regarding the utilization of SM by libraries and their patrons. The third group also encompasses three articles that adopt a mixed-method approach, combining content analysis with survey and interview techniques.

In conclusion, the analyzed studies underscore the potential benefits of Fb for academic libraries, emphasizing its role as a versatile communication and marketing tool. However, these benefits come with the caveat that libraries must tailor their approaches, prioritize content quality, and remain adaptable to changing user expectations. The multifaceted role of Fb in academic libraries, from addressing librarians' varying perceptions to navigating privacy concerns, has been explored. The study also highlights the importance of using Fb to foster user engagement and educational outreach. Ultimately, the research provides actionable recommendations for academic libraries to harness the full potential of Fb in connecting with students and promoting their services effectively.

The review reveals several research gaps in the field, including a lack of studies examining the impact of SM on specific library services and programs, limited research on the effectiveness of SM in promoting library collections, and few studies exploring SM's potential to support library outreach efforts to underserved communities.

It is essential to address these gaps in research for several reasons. Firstly, understanding the impact of SM on specific library services and programs is crucial for designing effective strategies and allocating resources. By investigating how SM influences various aspects of library operations,

such as reference services, programming, or information dissemination, we can optimize these services to meet library users' needs better.

Secondly, examining the effectiveness of SM in promoting library collections is essential for maximizing the reach and impact of these resources. Libraries invest significant resources in acquiring and maintaining collections, and leveraging SM platforms can enhance their visibility, accessibility, and usage. By conducting studies on this topic, we can identify best practices, improve collection promotion techniques, and ultimately increase user engagement with library materials.

Thirdly, exploring SM's potential to support library outreach efforts to underserved communities is paramount for promoting equitable access to information and resources. Underserved communities often face barriers to library services and may not be aware of the available resources. By harnessing the power of SM, libraries can extend their reach, connect with marginalized populations, and tailor their services to meet their needs better. Research in this area can illuminate effective strategies for engaging underserved communities through SM platforms and help bridge the digital divide.

Lastly, Fb has surpassed one billion global users, with 2.9 billion monthly active users. Demographic analysis as of January 2023 highlights a primary user group aged 25 to 34, making up 29.9% of the user population, followed by those aged 18 to 24 at 21.5%. This indicates that libraries still have a substantial Fb user base. However, libraries must adapt their content strategies, recognizing that younger generations will require new approaches and exploring alternative social media platforms.

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BIBLIOTEKA AKADEMICKA NA FACEBOOKU: PRZEGLĄD LITERATURY NAUKOWEJ Z LAT 2004-2022

ABSTRAKT: **Teza/Cel** – Celem niniejszego przeglądu literatury jest synteza i analiza istniejących opracowań naukowych na temat wykorzystania Facebooka przez biblioteki akademickie. **Metody badań** – Za pomocą kompleksowej analizy 23 opracowań opublikowanych w latach 2004-2022 autorka identyfikuje w swoim artykule trendy, metody badań i kluczowe odkrycia w omawianej dziedzinie. Opracowania podzielono na 3 kategorie w zależności od stosowanej w nich metodologii: analizy treści, ankiet/wywiadów lub metody mieszanej. **Wyniki** – Autorka podkreśla zalety wykorzystywania Facebooka przez biblioteki akademickie, kładąc nacisk na: strategie dopasowywane do indywidualnych potrzeb, jakość treści oraz dostosowywanie się do preferencji użytkowników w celu polepszenia komunikacji i marketingu. Ponadto Facebook wykazuje dużą skuteczność w ułatwianiu komunikacji, promowaniu usług bibliotecznych oraz gromadzeniu informacji zwrotnych od użytkowników. **Wnioski** – Niniejszy przegląd literatury pozwala zidentyfikować niezagospodarowane obszary badawcze i zgromadzić spostrzeżenia przydatne w kolejnych badaniach, wskazując na przydatność Facebooka w środowisku bibliotek akademickich.