

# Management of social media in libraries: A study on social media management among special libraries in Jakarta, Indonesia

*Ida Fajar Priyanto*

*Dwi Fitrina Cahyaningtyas*

*Universitas Gadjah Mada*

[Idafp75@gmail.com](mailto:Idafp75@gmail.com)

## **Abstract**

*Although social media has been believed to exist in the 1970s, but the modern social media actually has only started between the last decade of 20th century and the early 21 century. Classmate and SixDegree were considered the first social media and currently there are many social media applications available for anyone, besides few others. Social media plays an important role to communicate, to inform, to share ideas, and other activities that others may need to know. This qualitative study analyzed 6 special libraries in Jakarta concerning with their social media management during the pandemic of covid-19. The result showed that special libraries in Jakarta varied in making use of social media. Two libraries were very active in social media posts in order to be visible to their users and colleagues, while there is one library that did not make use of social media often. Responses to the picture posts were mostly from librarians from other libraries, while video posts were viewed by both library users and librarians. Types of posts and formats affect people's responses to the library's response. Librarians should analyze the types of information the users expect in social media, otherwise users will not respond to their information.*

**Keywords:** Social media, special libraries, libraries, visibility, user awareness

## **1. Introduction**

Social media emerged in the last decade of 20th century when Classmate, SixDegree, and Blackplanet, to name a few, appeared in public. At that time, users can use the social media to create profiles and add friends. Later, in the early 2000, Friendster attracted users when it was launched in 2003. It was then followed by MySpace and Facebook to launch in 2004, and Youtube 2005 and Twitter in 2006. While most social media are for social networking, LinkedIn appeared in 2003 as a professional social media. Many people use LinkedIn as a professional and business purposes. Carr and Hayes (2015, p. 50) defined social media as “internet-based channels that allow users to opportunistically interact and selectively self-present, either in real-time or asynchronously, with both broad and narrow audiences who derive value from user-generated content and the perception of interaction with others.” Meanwhile according to King (2015), social media at least have several functions, such as listening, making connections, getting responses, taking advantage of mobile technology, and extending reach.

Social media will help understand what the library users as well as the community actually think about the library.

Social media also can help the library learn the needs and wants of the users. Joo, Choi, Baek (2017) emphasized that social media have been the popular tool to communicate with library users.

Social media can also connect the library to its users by way of sharing information about the facilities, the collections, and activities. Meanwhile, the library can also learn from users through social media. By asking questions to the social media users, actually the library will get ideas from them. This is a good way to fulfill what the users actually want and need. The pandemic has caused libraries to close the library services for some time, then they reopen the services with the new regulation. It is this pandemic that has pushed the libraries to optimize the online services and therefore, librarians need to learn the benefits of online media to meet, to inform, and to serve the community better.

Social media have emerged as one of the media to increase the visibility of a library as well as to keep the users informed about the library and their services. In time of covid-19 pandemic, people have moved from onsite to online as the library is only visible online. Neog (2020) stated that social media are appropriate for information dissemination especially during the covid-19 pandemic and further stated that social media are crucial to deliver information.

Libraries also play a role in providing right information and fighting against fake news in the pandemic time as people need right information. Based on this idea, it is very relevant to consider the importance of moving all information about the library and its resources and facilities online. This change requires planning, strategies, and actions. For libraries that have practice online promotion, they find no problem with regard to informing the users online. However, for those that mostly onsite, they may not be familiar with the tools and activities. However, there may be other factors that affect a library to provide online services.

According to American Library Association (ALA) (2021), special libraries “offer unique opportunities to work in places such as corporations, hospitals, the military, museums, law firms, advertising agencies, professional associations, private businesses, and the government”

In Indonesia, public libraries are not as many as academic or public libraries. In Jakarta, special libraries mostly are available in the ministries and parliament. Special libraries also do not always available for public at all times. However, it is important for special libraries to inform the communities regarding current issues related to their goals and objectives and it is very valuable for special libraries if they are available both online and onsite. During the pandemic of covid-19, their presence online will surely be useful for the communities because most people stay at home and need information. Whether special libraries can perform well for public, that would be an interesting question.

## **2. Objective**

This paper analyzes how special libraries perform online to inform users and public in general during pandemic time and how they will do this in the future.

## **3. Methodology**

This is a qualitative study on the use of social media among special libraries, in this case, the government’s libraries especially the parliament and ministerial libraries. The study was conducted by analyzing the social media account of the special libraries, in this case, Instagram account. Instagram was chosen because in Indonesia, most special libraries have accounts. Meanwhile, interviews with the management of those libraries were also conducted in order to get further and deeper understanding about their social media management.

## **4. Discussion**

Six (6) Instagram accounts belonging to six (6) government institutions were analyzed in this study, namely Parliament Library, Ministry of Education Library, Ministry of Health Library, Ministry of Social Affairs Library, and Ministry of State Secretary Library, and Ministry of Religious Affairs.

No.	Name of Institution	Posts	Followers	Following
1	Parliament Library (Parliament)	252	933	46
2	Ministry of Education Library (MOE)	709	35500	107
3	Ministry of Health Library (MOH)	32	5255	14
4	Ministry of State Secretary (MSS) Library	277	661	35
5	Ministry of Administrative and Bureaucratic Reform (MABR) Library	23	41	8
6	Ministry of Religious Affairs (MRA) Library	504	2783	915

Table 1. list of posts, followers, and following of the special library accounts in Instagram

As seen on the above table, the overall number of posts among the libraries vary from 23 to 709. Meanwhile the number of followers also vary from 41 to 35500, while they follow between 8 to 915 Instagram accounts. According to the head of library of Ministry of Education, although they have 35,500 followers, it does not mean that they always respond to the posts by Ministry of Education Library. The same case also happen for Ministry of Religious Affairs Library. Meanwhile during pandemic of covid-19, the posts they did also varied. Here is the data of the posts they did during the pandemic of covid-19.

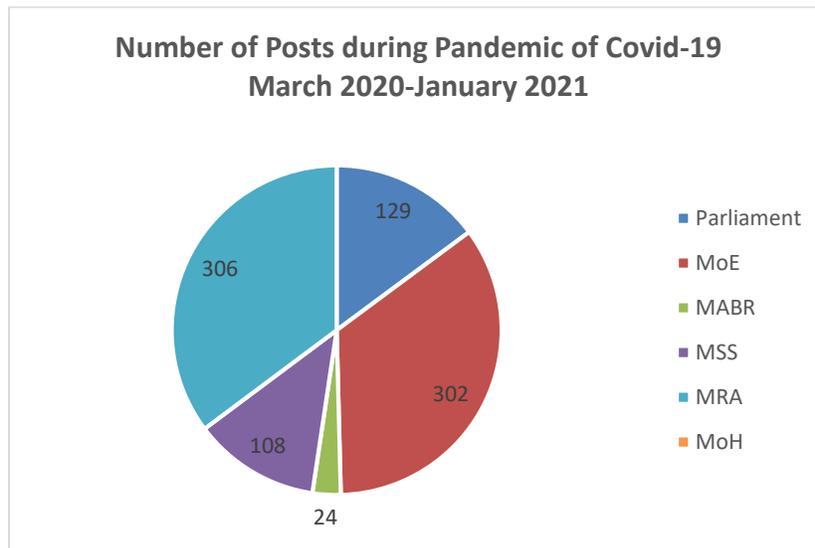


Chart 1. Number of Posts among special libraries

It is interesting to note that between March 2020 until January 2021, the library of Ministry of Religious Affairs posted the most (306) among all six libraries, followed by Ministry of Education Library; Parliament Library; and Ministry of State Secretary Library. Meanwhile Ministry of Health (MoH) posted only 1 during the pandemic of covid-19. This seems to be strange to see that Ministry of Health Library did not post information especially in relation to health and pandemic of covid-19, but this is due to the inavailability of specific staff to manage Instagram account.

Both libraries of Ministry of Education and Ministry of Religious Affairs actually have many followers, but those who responded to their posts were mostly librarians from other libraries, instead of their users. This means that the

communication between the libraries and their users have not been achieved. It also shows that there is strong relationship among librarians in Indonesia, but between librarians and the users. Meanwhile the number of videos posted can be seen in the following chart 2. What is interesting is that the video posts have more viewers compare to the pictures. Indeed unlike picture posts, video posts enjoyed much by the followers, both library users and librarians. Very probably, because videos are much enjoyed and preferred as information instead of pictures. While picture posts (by Ministry of Education Library) were liked by up to 822 Instagram users; video posts (by Ministry of Religious Affairs) were liked by up to 2686 Instagram users during pandemic time (March 2020-January 2021).

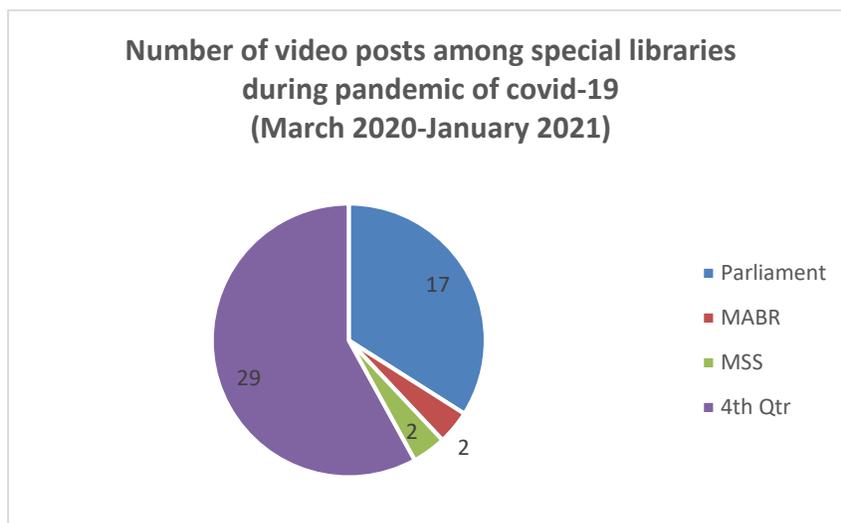


Chart 2. Number of video posts among special libraries

The results show that most special libraries in Jakarta are aware of their presence in the social media and try to maximize their social media in order to increase their visibility and welcome users and new ones. They also use the social media to inform users about their activities and existence. Meanwhile some other libraries do not consider social media as urgent and important during pandemic. They provide services if they get request from their users. However, due to the pandemic, some libraries do not reopen their services but they do greet their users online. This has shown that libraries are always try to reach their users using any possible means. Besides posting pictures and videos, special libraries hold activities such as webinars both on librarianship and other topics including health. The webinars are not only for librarians but also for public as the topics varied. In addition, they actively provide other information for the users. They use social media to invite participants to join webinar and the result of webinars are usually also shown through social media so that people may still be balbe to get information from the webinars although it is not live.

Meanwhile there are some special libraries that did little online during the pandemic of covid-19. They update information about the library and its activities irregularly. Lack of staff, no activities, and closing of office due to pandemic have made them unable to provide information physically and on social media.

## 5. Conclusion

It is important for libraries to keep their users informed about the libraries, especially during the pandemic of covid-19. Social media can be the best media of communication between librarians and library users. Librarians can share their information; they can even listen to the users about the users' ideas about the library, their needs and wants; and the libraries may also build closer interaction. Meanwhile, as the picture posts were mostly liked by other librarians; while video show were enjoyed by both libray users and librarians, special libraries should consider the format of information to share as the special libraries in Jakarta varied in optimizing the use of social media to communicate with their users. It seems that the libraries did not communicate with their users a lot.

In short, we can use social media to communicate with the users. Creating online information and activities, informing users about library facilities, and services are some of the keys for libraries to interact with users.

## 6. References

American Library Association (ALA) (2021). Special Libraries. Accessed from <http://www.ala.org/educationcareers/libcareers/type/special>

Carr, C.T. and Hayes, R.A. (2015), "Social media: defining, developing, and divining", *Atlantic Journal of Communication*, 23(1), 46-65.

Joo, S.; Choi, N.; Baek, T.H. (2018). Library marketing via social media The relationships between Facebook content and user engagement in public libraries. *Online Information Review*, 42(6), 940-955.

Neog, Shekharjyoti, "Library Services through Social Media during Lockdown due to COVID-19 with SpecialReference to University Libraries of Assam" (2020). *Library Philosophy and Practice* (e-journal). 4262. <https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac/4262>

Nils Beese (2019) Marketing the Library using Social Media Platforms: The Experience of the University Library Bochum, Germany, *International Information & Library Review*, 51:1, 36-41, DOI: 10.1080/10572317.2019.1568778