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THE EFFECTS OFAUTHENTIC PERSONAL BRANDING ON ACADEMIC LIBRARIANS' PROFESSIONAL IMAGE IN MALAYSIA

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ABSTRACT

Authentic personal branding emerges from academic librarians' true characters, values, strengths, uniqueness, and genius that in the end are about sustainability, authenticity, consistency, and the memorable personal brand. This quantitative study aims to identify the dimension, factors and examine the effects of authentic personal branding (APB) on academic librarians' professional image in Malaysia. The effects of APB focuses on the academic librarians' (a) reputation in a university, (b) responsibilities to library users and library services, and (c) their relationship with library users. The study covers 344 academic librarians specifically from 20 Public Institution of Higher Education (PIHE) in Malaysia. The questionnaires were distributed to the respondents according to purposive sampling as the main intention to identify all academic librarians in the selected universities. In details it applies the maximum variation sampling techniques in order to capture a wide range of perspectives related to the effects of authentic personal branding on academic librarians' professional image. The results were analysed using SPSS version 23 and Smart PLS 3.0 and involved combination of two types of study that are descriptive and causal or correlation. The findings found that authentic personal branding play a very significant role in effecting the academic librarians' professional image in Malaysia especially dealing with the personal ambition, personal brand and personal balanced scorecard on regards to their reputation in the University. Whereas, determinant for the responsibilities of the librarians to the library users and relationship with library users, only the personal balanced scorecard constructs significant to the study. These findings highlight the important role of having the authentic personal branding approach and strategies which at the end result a significant value to the academic librarians' professional image. Further studies are recommended to examine the reason behind the insignificant relationship in this study besides using a mixed method approach or qualitative research. This study helps in providing ideas to Malaysian librarians in creating a new tune of modern day needs for the librarianship profession and upgrading their personal professionalism by adapting the relevance criteria for effective authentic personal branding as the essence of wealth generation, to serve the community with the best talent skills and quality services.

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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1.1   Introduction

The focus of this research was to provide a background to understand the roles played by authentic personal branding in determining the professional image of academic librarians in Malaysia. Specifically, related to academic librarians' reputation in the university, responsibilities to library users and services, and relationship with library users. The chapter begins with a discussion on the background of the study followed by problem statement, research questions and objectives of the study. The scope and assumptions of this research were within the boundary of 344 academic librarians at 20 Public Institution of Higher Education (PIHE) in Malaysia. Some important operational definitions of terms of this study were introduced together with the quality and contribution of the research in the section significance of the study. The contributors and models were adopted from four main fields of research which were the management, marketing, information system and library information science. Limitation, conclusion, chapter summary and formation of the thesis also been discussed, and presented at the end of this chapter.

1.2   Background of the Study

The challenges of changing roles of librarians and their work environment can be unsettling as it goes with the issues of stereotypes (Seale, 2008), lack recognition of accomplishment (Walter, 2008), fair performance evaluation (Fagan, 2002), job security, lack of funding for professional development, lack of sponsorship to workshops and conferences, lack of uninterruptible internet facility and a dearth of professional mentors (Ezeani, Eke, & Ugwu, 2015). This statement is in line with the greatest challenges faced by librarians that categorized under their professional image. According to Oxford University Press (2018), professional image refer to the general impression that a worthy of or appropriate to a professional person; competent, skilful or assured present to the public. It also about the skill, good judgment, and polite behaviour that was expected from a person who was trained to do a job well (Merriam-