

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

**THE EFFECTS OF AUTHENTIC
PERSONAL BRANDING ON
ACADEMIC LIBRARIANS'
PROFESSIONAL IMAGE IN
MALAYSIA**

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Thesis submitted in fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
(Information Management)

Faculty of Information Management

October 2019

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.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Bismillahirrahmanirrahim and Alhamdulillah to Allah s.w.t. for the blessed of wellness and strength given to me in the process of completing this study and Nabi Muhammad s.a.w. for being the inspirations for me to become a better person.

First and foremost, I would like to express my gratitude and special thanks to my research supervisors Dr. Mad Khir Johari Abdullah Sani, Dr. Shamila Mohamed Shuhidan, Prof. Dr. Hj. Laili Hj. Hashim and Prof. Madya Norasiah Harun from Faculty of Information Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA, for their insightful knowledge and experience bestowed in me.

I also honestly appreciate the productive criticism and guidance from all librarians and staff in Perpustakaan Hamzah Sendut, Universiti Sains Malaysia (especially Tn. Hj. Mohd Pisol Ghadzali, En. Idris Hj. Ali, Pn. Arinawati Ayob, Pn. Fujica Azura Fesal, Pn. Husriati Hussain, Pn. Cik Ramlah Che Jaafar, En. Muhammad Akmal Ahmat, Pn. Habsah Abdul Rahman, En. Kirubananthan Sundaraju, Pn. Zainab Ajab Mohideen, family of Serials and Documents Division, USM), Dr. Yudi Fernando (lecturer in Graduate School of Business, USM), Dr. Diana Mohamad (lecturer in School of Housing, Building and Planning, USM), Dr. Jasni Dolah (lecturer in School of Arts, USM) and all my beloved friends those who directly or indirectly helped me along this journey.

Last but not least, I am very grateful to have my beloved family for being such wonderful companions through their encouragement, support and help in completing this research successfully. They are parts of my brain and soul; En. Ebrahim Abdul Manan (husband), En. Ahmad Idris (father), Pn. Norliza Mohd Sahar (mother), En. Abdul Manan Rumany (father in law), Pn. Rosnah Mohd Amin (mother in law), Pn. Maimunah (grandmother), Aqil Darwisy, Aufa Damia, Aisy Daiyan, Akif Dayyan and Adam Dhaffa (sons and daughter), Rosmadi, Rosmarzieyana, Roshafizal, Roshidayu Akma, Roslan, Rosatieqah, Ros Athilah Afiqah, Rosnasiha Athira, Rosnur Asyikin and Ros Harraz Haikal (siblings). This piece of victory is dedicated to all of you. Alhamdulillah.

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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 uninterrupted 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-