

Implementation of a social network in the academic library discovery-tools system: Examination of students' satisfaction and motivation to participate in the system

Noga Maoz

Advisors: Dr. Daphne Raban, University of Haifa & Dr. Yaron Ariel, The Max Stern yezreel Valley College

Academic libraries are constantly seeking IT innovations and so the library catalogue has developed into what is now called 'discovery-tools systems'. These systems resemble the Google search experience: a single and simple natural language search that retrieves information from multiple sources. While previous usability studies on academic libraries' information-retrieval systems have focused on functionality and ease of use, the current study focuses on hedonic aspects. Since the discovery system is the library's core product, it is important to develop it in correspondence to the digital culture and IT in the world outside of the library. We assume that given the popularity of Social Networking Systems, they should be part of academic libraries' discovery-tools system.

The aim of the study is to examine the impact of implementing a social network in a library discovery-tools system on students' satisfaction from the system and on their motivation to participate in the systems' social network.

The study's hypothesis are: **1.** There is a positive relationship between the social level of the library's discovery-tools system and users' satisfaction level. **2.** There is a positive relationship between the social level of the library's discovery-tools system and the user's social motivation level to participate in the system's SNS.

The research combines an experiment and a survey. Three mock-up versions of a discovery-tools system were developed, such that each version represents one of three social networking levels. Each participant (n=180) was exposed to one version.

The results indicate that students' satisfaction level were significantly higher at higher social networking levels. Additionally, students' social motivation levels were significantly higher at higher social networking levels.

The research theoretical contribution derives from its multidisciplinary nature and it serves as a basis for richer and varied library science studies.

The study's practical contribution could be in assisting the development of discovery-tools systems which may result with higher students' satisfaction and, in turn, with higher adoption and use.