

The Existence of Librarians in the Digital Era in College Libraries in Mataram City

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ABSTRACT

Purpose Research. To identify the existence of librarians in the digital era seen from the fulfillment of librarians' needs in carrying out their functions as library managers. **Research Method.** Using a qualitative descriptive approach conducted in 4 state and private university libraries in Mataram City. The selection of informants was carried out by purposive sampling. **Analysis Data.** While the stages of data analysis are data reduction, data presentation, and data verification. **Results.** The results of this study indicate that physiological needs, security needs, comfort needs, appreciation needs, and self-actualization needs are important needs for librarians in achieving well-being and improving competence, so that librarians continue to exist in the current digital era. However, various obstacles faced by librarians continue to exist in the current digital era, one of which is being responsive to information technology. **Conclusions.** The performance of librarians can be improved by looking at the fulfillment of the needs that have been obtained by librarians, so that the existence of librarians in the digital era can be achieved.

Keywords: *Existence of Librarians, College Libraries, Fulfillment of Needs*

A. INTRODUCTION

In supporting the implementation of education, research, and community service in higher education, the existence of a library as an information center is very important, this is in line with what was stated by Sutarno that a university library is a supporting element for universities in education, research, and community service activities. In order to support the tri dharma activities, the library is given several functions including educational function, information source, research support, recreation, publication, deposit, and information interpretation (Sutarno, 2020).

Referring to the definition of a university library in Law 43 of 2007, it is an institution that manages collections of written works, printed works, and/or recorded works professionally with a standard system to meet the educational, research, preservation, information, and recreational needs of its users. In Chapter II Article 1 Point 10 concerning university libraries, it is stated as an integral part of educational, research and community service activities and functions as a center for learning resources to support the achievement of educational goals based in universities. From both definitions, the position of the library is very clear, not only as a provider of information. But also, as a meeting point for the flow of information, culture, and thoughts from a variety of different users.

To support the implementation of quality libraries, universities need to fulfill the needs of librarians. To ensure that the position of librarians as the spearhead of the library works in their duties, their needs must be met properly. When the needs of librarians are not met, then the librarians will not be motivated in carrying out their functions and duties. This is in line with what Gitosudarmo said that in principle humans are motivated by a number of basic needs that are the same for all species, do not change, and come from genetic or instinctive sources (Gitosudarmo, 2018). If the needs of librarians are met properly, then their work in ensuring that the information available in the library can be accessed by users will be guaranteed. This emphasizes the function of the library, so that its extension can remain strong.

Librarians as the main spirit of the library must be motivated to work so that they can be sensitive to changes in user behavior, and always develop new things to support the implementation of comprehensive information transfer at all levels of society. This is in line with what was stated by Richard (2020) that motivation is a force that arises from within or outside a person that arouses enthusiasm and perseverance to achieve something desired. Because needs are what motivate a person.

According to Gibson explains that motivation is the main factor that drives someone to do all kinds of activities in an organizational work environment (Gibson, 2017). Therefore, motivation is often considered as a driving factor for someone's behavior. It can be concluded that for someone who wants to do their activities, there must be certain driving factors that prevent them from doing something. In relation to organizations, especially libraries, motivation is one of the most fundamental factors in supporting the achievement of organizational goals hierarchically.

The conditions for fulfilling librarian needs are increasingly complex along with the digital transformation in all lines of education today. According to Habber (2022), librarians are not only facilitated with basic needs, salaries, and allowances, but also need to be supported by digital literacy skills by providing adequate technological capacity building. This is in contrast to the conditions of librarians at Islamic Universities in Mataram City. Based on data from the Kaportais of Region

XIV in 2022, the management of Islamic university libraries is managed by 70% from non-library educational backgrounds, which should be based on UUD 43 of 2007, university libraries must be managed by library science graduates with a minimum of D2. This condition has an effect on the suboptimal implementation of capacity building training in the realm of digital information management in library management, because managers do not have knowledge in the library field. Data from the NTB Regional Library and Archives Service in 2022 shows that almost 70 university library development activities in Mataram City are technical and non-technological. In fact, the current era requires librarians to be equipped with adequate technological capabilities to support the performance of information distribution to all academic communities on campus.

There are several studies that have been conducted related to the needs of librarians in the digital era. The first study entitled the role of librarians in the era of information society 5.0 which aims to show whether the existence of libraries and the role of librarians in the era of society 5.0 is lost or persists. The results of this study show that librarians in the era of society 5.0 must be able to innovate with existing developments, communicate, collaborate and be able to manage various information by utilizing various technologies in the digital era (Ginting et al., 2023). The second study entitled digital literacy of librarians in the era of society 5.0: opportunities and challenges. The results of the study show that digital literacy of librarians in using digital media is still not optimal (Hijrana et al., 2022). Furthermore, the third study entitled the role and development of librarian competence in the digital era, which aims to analyze the role and competence of today's librarians in the digital era. The results of this study indicate that librarians need to have the initiative in meeting the information needs of users, improving skills especially in using information technology so that librarians become pioneers in the field of information and technology (Mustar & Rahmadanita, 2023). College librarians play a major role in transforming teaching and learning.

Based on the explanation and several problems above, it is the background for researchers to study the fulfillment of librarian needs in the Digital Era in maintaining the existence of College Libraries in Mataram City.

B. METHODS

Research Design

In order to identify the existence of librarians in the digital era seen from the fulfillment of librarians' needs in carrying out their functions as library managers, this study used a quantitative descriptive research methodology.

Research location.

The research was conducted in state and private university libraries located in Mataram City. This location was chosen because university libraries are one of the libraries that continue to develop in the digital era in accordance with the smooth process of increasing knowledge at the university level.

Research Informan

The informants in this study were librarians working in state and private university libraries. The selection of informants was carried out by purposive sampling according to Sugiyono (2010), namely a data source sampling technique with certain considerations, for example, the person who is considered to know the most about what we expect, or maybe he is the ruler so that it will be easier for researchers to explore the subject to be studied. The subjects in this study were librarians with more than five years of experience at the Mataram University Library and members of the Mataram City University Library Forum, which includes 12 librarians. The object of this study was the existence of librarians in the digital era.

Data collection

This study, the researcher only used data collection techniques a) observations conducted at colage in Mataram City; b) interviews with librarians; c) documentation by collecting various references, data and other sources of information related to the research theme.

Data Analysis Techniques

While the stages of data analysis are data reduction, data presentation, and data verification. Thus, in this study the data analysis technique begins with using data reduction by summarizing, presenting data and drawing conclusions by interpreting the data that has been analyzed by composing descriptive sentences that can be understood by others.

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Existence of Librarians in the Digital Era

Librarians have a vital role for the future of a nation as drivers of knowledge transfer and protectors of literacy culture. Unfortunately, in Indonesia, the existence of librarians can be said to be still marginalized. Unlike other professions, such as doctors, architects, or police, the profession of librarian is still less popular, even looked down upon. The work of a librarian is often considered a boring job, identical to bookworms, arranging books, and cleaning dust that sticks to bookshelves.

Libraries used to be considered as a means of borrowing and returning collections, but with the development of information technology and the explosion of information, librarians on duty have become active in providing interesting socialization and promotions for the academic community. Today's library users are very different from those in the past, because in general in the past it was difficult for people to come to the library, except because they were forced to complete assignments given by teachers or lecturers (Priyanto, 2014). Librarians as information servants have complex tasks in addition to being information servants, they also play a role as information processors. Librarians are also required to be able to provide services to the academic community who have diverse needs. If the library can provide actual and innovative information services, then users will use the information in the library.

The library that is needed is one where librarians can provide fast and sophisticated information services. This information service is what has a selling

point. The services provided by librarians to the academic community will build user trust to come to the library. A library is said to be successful if the services provided by librarians to users in searching for information sources run well (Ngatini, 2020). So, it is necessary to pay attention to the needs of librarians so that they can provide appropriate and fast information services according to the information needs of library users.

Fulfillment of Librarian Needs

Librarians can be said to have existence if their needs have been met or fulfilled (Iskandar, 2016). According to Abraham Maslow there are 5 (five) types of basic needs, which are always experienced by an individual (Maslow, 1984). Maslow's own Hierarchy of Needs Theory calls it a synthesis or blend of holistic dynamic theories. It is called so because Maslow based his theory by following the functional tradition of James and Dewey, which is combined with elements of Wertheimer's beliefs, Goldstein, and Gestalt psychology, and with the dynamism of Freud, Fromm, Horney, Reich, Jung, and Adler.

1. *Physiological Needs*

Physiological needs consist of basic needs and are primary. What Maslow stated was confirmed by Winardi where it is explained that physiological needs are sometimes called biological needs in the modern work environment and include the desire to get payment (wages/salaries), holidays, retirement plans, rest periods, a pleasant work environment, good lighting and in certain workplaces air conditioning facilities (Winardi, 2010).

According to Daft physiological needs are the strongest and most urgent needs that must be met primarily by humans in carrying out their daily lives (Daft, 2014). This means that in humans who really feel lacking everything in their lives, it is very likely that the greatest motivation is physiological needs and not others. In other words, an individual who is impoverished in his life, will likely always be motivated by these needs.

Referring to Maslow's theory, physiological needs are the most basic needs of every human being that can determine the success or failure of any work. The world of work that can be categorized as physiological is the salary that can be used as a source of daily livelihood. Seeing the salary conditions of librarians in Mataram City which is the object of this study does not have much impact, for librarians in universities.

The salary conditions received do not change even though the work is increasingly complex, but in terms of benefits there are differences seen from the performance of the librarian. Providing a stable salary will affect work patterns and can avoid the emergence of various perceptions from librarians. This is also in line with the theory of reinforcement stated by Thorndike that a response followed by continuous rewards will tend to be repeated in the future (Islamiati et al., 2024). The implication for the wheels of organizational management is that high performance followed by rewards (money) will result in high performance that tends to occur in the future. With the same thinking, high performance that is not followed by rewards (money) will make that performance disappear in the future.

Seeing the description of the physiological condition of librarians

above makes the existence of libraries in this digital era undisturbed, while remaining an institution responsible for providing information sources to all academicians in universities.

2. *The need for security*

Maslow stated that the need for security reflects the desire to secure the rewards that have been achieved and to protect oneself from danger, injury, threat, accident, loss (Maslow, 1984). In organizations, such needs are seen in the desire for job security, seniority systems, unions, safe working conditions, additional benefits, insurance, and the possibility of pensions, savings, and waiting money if certain things happen.

In a job, the need for security felt by workers becomes a need that must be met by every profit or non-profit institution. When the security of a librarian is guaranteed in his workplace, namely the library, it will have a maximum impact on the productivity of the work produced. If the work carried out by the librarian is not optimal, it will have an impact on the disruption of library service activities and the library will be left behind by advances in information technology. For example, the circulation of information in universities will run in place and the information transformation process is also not renewable. So, it is necessary for university leaders or heads of libraries to provide job security for librarians. Various security that needs to be considered in the library, namely, 1) Library layout and use of work equipment; 2) Occupational health (Armita, 2018).

Each library has provided various facilities for the safety of librarians and users, both in terms of space, supporting facilities and health facilities. The sense of security that librarians get in terms of health from the availability of health equipment such as first aid kits and the existence of health protocols that are running during Covid-19. This kind of commitment from universities will have an impact on the performance of librarians in running the library organization to ensure that information can be accessed in full by all users without being disturbed.

3. *The need to be accepted*

Furthermore, Maslow explained that after physiological and security needs have been met, the individual's attention shifts to the desire to get friends, love and feelings of acceptance (Maslow, 1984). As social beings, humans are happy when they are liked, and try to fulfill social needs when they work, by helping formal and informal groups, and they work together with their colleagues, and they are involved in activities carried out by the company where they work.

The librarian profession is a provider of information services available in the library. The presence of librarians helps the library to achieve its institutional goals and carry out its function as an information provider. Especially in college libraries, the role of librarians is very important to help the teaching and learning process for the academic community. The important role of a librarian places librarians on the same

level as other professions, which allows them to collaborate with various academic communities in the college environment and participate in various activities carried out by the college.

Librarians have an important role in the smooth running of teaching and learning activities in universities. In various activities held by universities, librarians are always involved. Libraries also carry out various digital and online-based service innovations, which have received a positive response from users. Such as providing online circulation services, open access repositories, e-journal and e-book services and even providing digital-based training programs to improve the competence of library users. So that from various innovations and activity programs carried out by libraries, they increase the existence of librarians in the digital era.

4. *Need for Appreciation*

Finally, Maslow stated that at the fourth level of Maslow's hierarchy, there is an individual's need for appreciation, or also called the "selfish" need (Maslow, 1984). This need is related to the desire to have a positive image and receive attention, recognition, and appreciation from others. In an organization, the need for appreciation shows the motivation to be recognized, great responsibility, high status, and recognition for contributions to the organization.

Librarians are one of the components that cannot be separated from the wheels of the organization in the library. Librarians are the main pillars in the information service process. When librarians have problems, the effect is a decline in the existence of the library. So that university leaders and heads of libraries must think about what awards or rewards can be given to librarians who have achievements that are in accordance with the work efforts they have made. This can be a motivation for librarians to be able to provide a positive image in providing information services.

The need for appreciation for librarians will have an impact on the motivation of the work they do. Giving appreciation to librarians from the leadership will affect their performance. If the need for appreciation is given, it will have an impact on self-confidence and increased services provided to library users. Although in the results of interviews with informants, there were also those who did not think too much about appreciation, but focused more on how to maximize work so that the service provided to users could be more optimal. According to Thorndike in Ryamond (2014), appreciation will have quite an impact on librarian performance, because with appreciation it has an impact on self-confidence, subsequent achievements, competence, knowledge, and independence in librarians. When library institutions understand appreciation as an activity that must be planned carefully, it can facilitate the universal desire of librarians to be competitive, stand out and surpass the achievements of others.

5. *Self-Actualization Needs*

Finally, according to Maslow, the need to experience self-fulfillment,

which is the highest category of needs (Maslow, 1984). These needs include the need to develop one's potential, improve one's abilities, and become a better person. The need for Self-Actualization by the organization can be met by providing opportunities for people to grow, develop creativity, and get training to do challenging tasks and achieve achievements.

Self-actualization is the main need given to librarians to develop their potential. The need for self-actualization by the library can be fulfilled by providing opportunities for librarians to develop creativity and get training to develop themselves in this digital era so as not to be left behind by advances in information technology. The leadership and library institutions must support librarians in developing self-actualization both in terms of providing facilities and providing opportunities to increase their knowledge. At the UIN Mataram library, the fulfillment of self-actualization needs is provided by the university providing facilities that support the increase in librarian potential.

The convenience in this digital era has positive and negative values for librarians. On the positive side, librarians are given convenience in developing themselves with various online training and on the negative side, librarians must quickly develop their potential in mastering various applications because the development of information technology continues to grow. From the description of this informant, it is clearly depicted that the implementation of self-actualization in librarians has been running optimally, both facilitated by their institutions and with the awareness of librarians. The need for self-actualization is very important to provide maximum information services so that the existence of librarians in this digital era remains visible.

Obstacles in Maintaining the Existence of Librarians in the Digital Era

There have been various changes in the world of libraries in the digital era, such as changes in collections, facilities and infrastructure. In college libraries, library collections are currently not only printed collections but also electronic collections or e-books, online educational journals and information searches through printed catalogs have changed to online catalogs (Fatmawati, 2017).

Librarians in the digital era are certainly different from librarians in the previous era. Although librarians in college libraries have made various changes to keep up with the times, there are still various obstacles faced. One of them is the advancement of technology that allows unlimited access to digital information via the internet quickly and efficiently. This can reduce the need for physical access to information in libraries, so college librarians must find ways to maintain their relevance (Arum & Marfianti, 2021).

Librarians in college libraries must adapt to their changing roles. The large amount of digital data and the need for good metadata challenge libraries in managing and providing access to digital information sources. User privacy protection and digital data security are important issues, especially in managing user personal data (Broughton & Thomas, 2017). Changes in scholarly publication models, such as the rise of open access journals and digital publications, are

changing the way libraries manage and provide access to scholarly literature. Libraries must support changing learning models, including distance learning, e-learning, and the use of technology in education (Wahyuni & Uyun, 2022) and how to manage digital collections, metadata and provide digital literacy to library users (Aharony, 2019). The role of librarians is expanded as partners in creating new knowledge for researchers (Haddow & Mamtora, 2017).

Librarians must face the challenges of archiving and conserving digital resources to ensure that they remain available for future generations, thus requiring specific skills for librarians. College libraries need to focus on innovation, user education, partnerships with publishers and information resource providers, and developing strategies that can maintain the relevance and benefits of libraries in the ever-changing digital era. In addition, librarians are at the forefront of promoting digital literacy, equipping users with the skills to critically evaluate online information, distinguish credible sources from misinformation, and leverage digital tools for research and learning (Doyle, 2019).

Today's librarians are not only able to describe, analyze document subjects, classify and so on for information search purposes, librarians must also have technological skills. The technological skills that librarians need to have are especially in managing various digital information sources. The entire campus academic community, not only students but also lecturers and educators also need to be taught information literacy skills, how to carry out search strategies, and evaluate trusted digital information sources. Librarians play an important role in managing information and discovering knowledge by utilizing the potential of the digital era.

E. CONCLUSION

From the discussion of the research above, it can be concluded that the existence of librarians in the digital era at universities in Mataram City continues to change. The current digital era forces librarians to continue to improve their competence to continue to exist amidst advances in information technology. Information services provided by librarians have also changed by utilizing information technology, librarians continue to improve to provide maximum service to their users.

Librarian performance can be improved by looking at the fulfillment of needs that have been obtained by librarians. Basic needs such as physiological needs, namely salary, have not changed at all, both in state and private universities, even though the work carried out continues to change and improve. Furthermore, the problem of the security and comfort of librarians' work in this digital era is still considered by the university by providing various supporting facilities and supporting work processes. Acceptance from the academic community for programs run such as online services, digital services and supporting programs related to improving the competence of library users in the digital era, is well received and positive by the academic community so that the existence of librarians increases. Finally, the self-actualization of librarians in this digital era



continues to be improved so as not to be buried by time, because changes continue to occur rapidly so that librarians are required to improve their competence and knowledge so that the information provided to library users is also in accordance with the needs of the times.

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