

Librarians Anxiety at Higher Education Library: A Case Study of Gadjah Mada University Library

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Abstract

The research describes anxieties experienced by Higher Education's librarians. This research uses qualitative approach and case study method toward librarians in Gadjah Mada University's Library. The informants were selected with purposive sampling. Data collection techniques for this research were observations, interviews and literature studies. The purposes of this research are to describe and reveal that Higher Education's librarians are aware of having anxieties in their work. The findings of this research show two factors they faced in library. First, competency anxiety: they are difficult to follow library transformation (technology based); scientific developments in library science between past and current. Second, anxiety for the user: they are worried about plagiarism when providing open access services; they consider library as a formal space that restricts user's freedom in taking action.

Keywords: Librarian, Librarians Anxiety, Librarians Competency, Gadjah Mada University Library

1 Background

Library as a support element in a university academic activities has an important role in providing a wide range of services aimed at fulfilling of academic community's needs. The services provided in the library must have been set in the policy made by each library. The rules regulate about the users' ethics when they visit the library, the policy of the collection access and the using of facilities provided. Regulations made by each library are not completely the same. As an example, the policy to dress neatly when the users visit the library, perhaps some libraries do not have a problem with it, yet a lot of libraries demand

the users for a well-dressed in shirt, trousers, and shoes when they come to the library. Another policy is the prohibition to bring food and drink to the library. On the other hand, perhaps nowadays libraries provide an own café, so that in certain place the users may read or do assignment while eating and drinking.

The policy differences are not only found in ethical problems, but also in information access provided in the library. Institutional repository that should be opened to the public, in some university's libraries are still closed access to such information, and require the users to come directly to the library if they want to access the full text of research collections, and any other requirements are needed to be able to access of scholars works.

It is like what usually happen a lot in university's libraries in Indonesia. One of them is Library Center of Gajah Mada University that seems to limit the access to institutional repository for users that search the information from outside the library. Besides, Gajah Mada University's Library even has a policy on prohibiting of carrying camera or mobile phone when entering the research collections room. The restriction definitely makes a lot of disappointment for the user.

The transformation of service models in the library nowadays should make the librarians consider rearranging the policy intended for the users. Even though some of librarians are beginning to accept the transformation that occurred in the library, but the reality in Indonesia, there are still a lot of libraries that are difficult to avoid their old perception, as we encountered at the library of Gajah Mada University. The question in this research is whether this transformation makes anxiety for the librarians in Gajah Mada University's library? Is there any anxiety experienced by the librarians if they provide the access to scientific papers openly?

If we observe at some researches exist, indeed there are many studies about library anxiety, but those studies are more focused on the users and put aside the librarians. This raises a question whether the research on librarian's anxiety is a research that are rarely done and considered as minor research. Due to the fact, librarian also has very important role in making policies in the library. If there is anxiety motivating the librarian in making a policy in the library, it may affect the interest of users in accessing library. Besides that, librarian's competency also needs critical attention in library transformation era as a result of technology developments.

As the element of activity organizer and policy maker in a library, a discussion on librarian's anxiety will be an important subject of study object to do. With this discussion, we are expected to find out what is currently worrying librarians who have not been able to accept

transformation that occur in the library. Therefore, this research examines about what the anxiety faced by librarians in the library of Gajah Mada University.

2 Research method

This research used qualitative approach with case study method. In selecting sample, this research used nonprobability sampling technique. The nonprobability technique that the researchers choose was purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is a technique of sample selection done by carefully selecting chosen people by the researchers. In this sample selection, the researchers try to make sure that the selected sample can represent all the population class, so that those samples are considered essential from the population and representative (Nasution, 2011). The criteria for selected sample are: (1) Work as the librarian in Gadjah Mada University's library; (2) Classified as active and excellent librarians; (3) Represent the educational level (diploma, bachelor, and master of library, and bachelor of other courses that have librarian training).

3 Findings

Gadjah Mada University's Library has approximately 85 librarians. Their work roles and tasks give them the challenges and also has its own difficulty level. A variety of different educational backgrounds also influence the pressure they face in completing the work. Based on the results of research conducted, several factors such as educational background, cultural background, and organizational policies affecting the librarians in understanding their duties. This makes them face some anxiety, including:

3.1 Competency Anxiety

According to the result of observed research, it was found that librarians are worried about their competency in using technology. In this modern technology era, any type of task done by the librarian has slowly replaced by technology, so whether they want it or not, they are forced to be able to master technology as it was said by the reference librarian:

“Besides looking for references or doing consultation with users, librarians also have to master technology works. It because nowadays everything has been integrated with the technology and as a librarian we should not be blind of technology or users will prefer the help of technology than librarian and leave librarian and also conventional library.”

As technology and science grow, library is also required to quickly follow the changes. Currently librarians are facing rapid changes of library development concept. Library 2.0 emerged as one of the concepts developed in 2000s era which define library as a type that the services oriented to user/patron, the collaboration between librarians - users, librarians and involves the application of web 2.0 technology in information system and library website (Nugraha, 2012). The Implementation of library 2.0 concept is still relatively new in the world of libraries in Indonesia, then it has emerged Library 3.0 concept that give us an understanding about the big influence of technology especially web technology, the changes of users' behavior, the importance of collaboration that is important in the development of third-generation of library (Rifai, 2014). Some librarians at Gadjah Mada University's library realize the interference of technology in a side giving a positive effect for them, but also has a negative effect on the librarians themselves.

The in charge on Circulation Service, stated:

“Since the technology also has penetrated into libraries, at the beginning we need about 3 to 5 staff for circulation service. But if there is a sufficient self- service using multiple computers, we can reduce the number of librarians in loaning division, only one person is needed.”

What actually happened to the librarian of Gadjah Mada University's library is that they realized that there was a worry to technological developments with scientific competence they have. The problems that arise are they aware of the difference in the times when they studied about library science with today's complex problem in the library. Some of them, librarians can cope up with their anxiety by following a self-development training, but others cannot cope their anxiety by simply focusing on technical work.

According to reference librarian statement, there are several competencies required from librarians this time that they did not get them when they studied in college or in librarian training. The main thing is that they are to be skillful in using internet technology, user-oriented and be up-to-date. This statement is in line with the opinion of Huvila et al. (2013) which says there are some abilities/fundamental characteristics that must be owned by the librarian; responsible, cooperative, communicative, flexible, and open to new challenges. While facing the Library 2.0, according to this research, there are several criteria required by librarians; internet competent, user-oriented, active, internet minded, virtual, and up-to-date. The staff of Thesis and Dissertation Department, has other ideas to cope the anxiety felt to meet the needs of the user:

“To cope with anxiety if we can not help the user, personally I often ask them by having conversation casually. From the conversations I know what I can do right now to help them to meet their needs.”

According to the explanation, it can be concluded that the competence factor is one of librarian’s anxiety, with respect to mastery of technological and scientific developments in the field of libraries. The anxiety related to this competence, University of Gajah Mada (UGM) librarians have some ways to overcome it; by following training, sharing knowledge with fellow librarians, and often asking to the user how librarians can help them.

3.2 Anxiety to the user

Users are important component of the library. Based on observations and interviews of this research, we get a discovery that librarians of a university library have its own anxiety for users. In the library of the UGM, the anxiety towards the users are reflected in the policies and regulations of the library compiled by the library itself. Anxiety to users that is experienced by university librarian found in several aspects:

1 Ethics

In this case, the librarians have anxiety about ethical problems associated with the user. Ethics becomes special spotlight for the librarian that affect them in making policy in the library.

As excerpt of the interview conducted with Circulation Services incharge:

“Basically the library provides conducive environment to improve intellectual ability of its librarians, and students. Yet besides that, I think the library is also to educate the moral of its user such as policy in dressing, bringing food and not making noise in the library, especially in university libraries. We apply those policies with the current policies, except in a public library, where they may free the users from the strict rules.”

As an institution that has functions in education, service and recreation, library sometimes is also interpreted as a formal organization or institution, especially at the university library level. Those assumptions make the library locked into sticky rules, thus limiting users to a well-dressed and polite when entering the library. Library’s transformation has created many changes in the type of services in this digital era. If we go to the public library, it may be reasonable if the user there wearing sandals or dressing more casual, but when we visit a university library in Indonesia, users are required to dress neatly in shirts and shoes, and sometimes they still require the user to be quiet in the library.

However, after many changes nowadays the user likes a quiet, many users go to the library just for chatting or discussing an issue with their friends. Therefore, the library must change the perceptions of those who believed that the library is a quiet place. As stated by Carpenter (2011) which states that the library staff should have stopped to set the old rules like staying quiet in the library. To make those changes, the easiest thing to do is to change the policy and publish it for the entire library.

UGM library is actually one of university libraries that start to follow some transformations in the library field, as has been providing many spaces for group discussion, seminar rooms and a lot of informal learning space. However, UGM library is also one of the libraries that still consider the university library as a formal institution that follow the prime institution, so that even if the user came to the library to discuss an activity or just chat with friends, they still have to dress smartly and are not allowed to use mobile phones, bring food and drinks on a particular service area. Lee (2013) said that the library field now has responded to the challenge in the service provided by the library. So that libraries start to provide facilities and services that are friendlier, called “social space,” such as the library has provided café, room for collaborative group study and the “commons learning”. With the library as a social space, the user would feel more comfortable and relaxed in the library, because they consider the library not as a quiet learning, but the library that can be a means of gathering or simply enjoy a coffee while we can do our job.

Based on interview with UGM’s librarian, he said that:

“The policies applied by the librarian, such as the must to dress smartly because ethically a person entering the office in our society should be dress smartly, so the users who come to the library should also be well-dressed, considering this is a university library.”

Another statement by a librarian:

“It’s not allowed to bring food into the same room with a collection place. The library has provided its own cafeteria, so the user can enjoy a meal in the cafeteria. If using collections while eating or drinking, especially colored foods like coffee and tea, it will cause a risk of damage to the collections used. Besides that, the smell of food and beverages that sting will annoy other users.”

On the basis of that policy changes applied in the library, it is essential to meet the demands of the current user. The existence of this policy change is one of the things that researchers emphasize because it is relatively easy to apply. As stated by Carpenter (2011) that the policy

of the library in the traditional concept is now considered does not reflect how users use the library as a place to learn today. As we see, many university libraries are starting to provide more pleasing facilities.

2. Open access and plagiarism issue

Among librarians there has been much discussed about the plagiarism issue in the academic setting. In a range of librarians' meeting, they debate a lot about the exact definition of plagiarism, whether the student is plagiarizing consciously or not, what punishment should be given if a student caught plagiarizing and many other aspects of plagiarism (Zimmerman, 2012). The findings obtained that UGM's library does not provide open access repository because of their concern over the problem of plagiarism. They worry about users in libraries act of plagiarism in completing coursework or scientific work.

The fear of plagiarism is caused by librarian's assumption that plagiarism culture is still frequently encountered in Indonesia. Based on the librarian's opinion, our society is not ready yet for the information openness, so they take an easy way and ultimately contributes to "copy and paste culture". Besides, actually the library is not completely close the access to the research information. When the users come to the library, they can read directly via PC, with direct reading in the library at least it can minimize the plagiarism problem.

The following statements made by Sarwono, the UGM's librarian:

"Closed access is created because of the cultures of plagiarism which indicates that our society is not fully ready with the information openness. The ease of access to information that makes it all becomes more simply to make them easier to get things like copy and paste. If they come directly to the library, they can get access in full text. At least, they read them not only copying text without reading and libraries can reduce acts of plagiarism."

The question that appear in digital age is whether the library has a fear if users left it? It's because they are closed access for the information and collection, and it makes library become information institution which is slow and difficult to get with the access of information. Based on interview by UGM Librarian, who stated that users will always come to library if the access is only possible by library's PCs. If the access toward research information is serviced openly and can be done from their homes, it is believed that users will not visit the library anymore. This describes that there is an anxiety in librarians if information is serviced openly, users may not come to the library because they can access all collections from their homes.

“There may be possibility of anxiety toward users who will not visit library anymore because all information access is closed, I think it will not happen. On the contrary because of the closed access, information can only be provided by coming to library, they will come to get the information. Otherwise if the access is open, users may not come to library because they can get the information easily without need to come to library.”

Based on the description about librarians’ anxiety toward open access and plagiarism, it can be inferred that if research collections is served openly, the act of plagiarism can easily be done. Besides that, with the existence of closed access collections, users are anxious and attracted to come to the library.

4 Conclusion

Based on the observations through direct interviews with the UGM librarians, it may be concluded that: the anxiety felt by them is caused by competence factor and the anxiety by the users. The anxiety factor that is felt varies with competence level in IT mastery and sciences development in the field of library. The anxiety that is felt for the user is namely related to ethical, open access and plagiarism issues. Anxiety that is related to the user's ethics is caused by librarian's perceptions that consider that university's library as a formal institution that follows its main institution. Hence users wanting to visit the library should also use proper clothes. By this ethical anxiety, library should have a policy governing the user to not bring food or drink or not to use camera in certain service rooms. Based on open access and the issue of plagiarism, UGM librarians face the anxiety if research collections are open for public thereby easing the act of plagiarism. So that to access the full text of research collections, users are suggested to read directly and use PCs provided in research rooms.

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