



## Librarian Ethics: the Basic Attitude of Librarians at Medan Library and Archives Service is Based on the Indonesian Librarian Code of Ethics

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ABSTRACT	ARTICLE INFO
<p>This study aimed to determine the ethics of librarians on the basic attitudes of the Medan City Archives and Library Service. This research method uses descriptive research with a qualitative approach. The informants in this study were 4 librarians at the Medan City Archives and Library Service. The technique of taking informants using the purposive sampling technique. Data collection techniques through observation, interviews, and literature study. Data analysis in this study is carried on 3 (three) stages, namely data reduction, data presentation and conclusions. The results of this study show that the librarian of the Medan City Archives and Library Service carries out the task according to the visitors' needs by providing exemplary services and paying attention to the visitors' needs. Librarians strive to maintain competency excellence through various activities and are responsible for work in their fields. The librarian of the Medan City Library and Archives Service seeks to distinguish between personal attitudes and professional duties so that the services provided to users run well and avoid abuse of the profession in their duties.</p> <p>© 2021 Edulib</p>	<p><b>Article History:</b> <i>Submitted/Received 28 Mar 2021</i> <i>First Revised 25 Apr 2021</i> <i>Accepted 05 May 2021</i> <i>First Available online 12 May 2021</i> <i>Publication Date 31 May 2021</i></p> <hr/> <p><b>Keyword:</b> <i>Librarian basic attitudes,</i> <i>Librarian code of ethics,</i> <i>Librarian ethics.</i></p>

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The development of the library cannot be far from the librarian's role. The library cannot run well without a librarian carrying out library management activities. A person who is an expert in the field of library management is called a professional librarian. In carrying out a librarian profession, there is a high expectation of having good ethics about the library as a place of work, the users as the users served, colleagues, members of the profession, and the community in general.

Librarians, as a profession, certainly have ethics. A code of ethics regulates librarian ethics in acting. The code of ethics in the librarian profession is called the Librarian Code of Ethics (KEP), created by the Indonesian Librarian Association (IPI). The librarian's code of ethics regulates the space between professions, organizations, and the community. The purpose of the code of ethics is as a guideline to maintain honor and dignity and maintain the welfare of members. The Code of Ethics must apply to professional staff, such as librarians.

In reality, in the field, some librarians who work in the library serving users are indifferent, unfriendly, and do not smile easily. Many librarians' code of ethics is not getting shown correctly, so many librarians are cold and even impolite in serving the visitors who visit the library. From this fact, the researcher wants to further examine the ethics of librarians at the Medan City Library and Archives Service, which is a public library that serves many users from various walks of life. Based on the description of the background above attracted the attention of researchers to examine "Librarian Ethics: Basic Attitudes of Librarians at the Medan City Library and Archives Service based on the Code of Ethics for Librarians in Indonesia."

Ethics is a reflection of what humans do and do. Ethics is a discipline that deals with good and bad and what is a moral obligation (Sims, 2003). The Big Indonesian Dictionary Departement (KBBI) states that ethics contains three meanings, namely: (i) Knowledge of good and bad and moral rights and obligations; (ii) A collection of principles or values relating to morality; (iii) Values about right and wrong held by a group or society (Bertens, 2001).

Ethics has three meanings, (Hermawan & Zen, 2006) namely: (i) Ethics (habits, character) refers to people with certain habits or characters. Throughout a person's life, the formation process occurs slowly but continuously, forming patterns and forming a solid surface. (ii) Ethics, in the plural, means customs, namely the norms adopted by certain groups, groups, or communities regarding good and bad deeds. (iii) Ethics is the study of the principles of good and bad behavior.

From some of the opinions above, it can be concluded that ethics is the science of the good or bad of a person or group in regulating their behavior.

According to Law no. 43 of 2007 librarian is someone who has the competencies obtained through education and librarian training and has the duties and responsibilities to carry out library management and services (Perpustakaan Nasional RI, 2007). The Indonesian Librarian Association (IPI) states that a librarian is a person who carries out library activities by providing services to the community by the duties of the parent institution based on library science, documentation, and information held through education (Soeatminah, 1992). To become a librarian, one must first obtain a bachelor's degree in a specific area to pursue a master's degree in the library sector (Purwono, 2013). A librarian carries out library activities by providing services to the community by the duties of the parent institution based on library science, documentation, and information they have through education (Basuki, 1991).

It can be concluded that a librarian is an expert in the field of librarianship and is responsible for managing and providing services to users through undergraduate education in the library.

According to what stated before, the quality of librarians will be as follows: (i) Librarians will work to meet the needs of library users. And not make it difficult. (ii) Can communicate so that it can quickly identify user needs; (iii) Having technical skills in the library area is at least equivalent to a bachelor's education (diploma 2) in the field of Libraries Documentation and information; (iv) Can speak foreign languages, especially English, primarily to facilitate contact with the international world; (v) Able to develop techniques and work procedures in the field of libraries; (vi) Able to take advantage of developments in science and technology for library development purposes. (vii) Able to independently carry out research in the field of libraries, documentation, and information (Purwono, 2013).

Professional ethics in a profession is known as a code of ethics. According to Purwono, the code of ethics is a system of norms of values or professional rules that explicitly, in writing, stipulate what is right and what is good (Purwono, 2013). The Code of Ethics is a set of standard rules of behavior in the form of values and norms made by professional organizations to help them guide their members in carrying out the roles, functions, and duties of the profession in society (Nuraini, 2018). A Code of ethics is a system of written professional norms, values, and rules that clearly state what is right and good and what is not right and not suitable for professionals (Suwarno, 2016).

Based on the statement above, the code of ethics is a set of rules of behavior for members of the profession to carry out their duties and responsibilities.

The code of ethics aims to regulate the space for professionals to provide the best service to their users or customers and prevent unprofessional actions (Basuki, 2007). The code of ethics aims to ensure that professionals provide their clients with the highest and best quality services or work (Purwono, 2013). Or, to protect service users from unprofessional actions. Purpose of the professional code of ethics (Suwarno, 2016) are namely: (i) To uphold the dignity of the profession; (ii) To protect and maintain the welfare of the members; (iii) To increase the dedication of the members of the profession; (iv) To improve the quality of the profession; (v) To improve the quality of professional organizations; (vi) Improving service above personal profit; (vii) Have a strong and closely interwoven professional organization; (viii) Define its standards.

The librarian's code of ethics is a guideline that a librarian in his work must carry out. The librarian's code of ethics is the starting point for professionals in the field of librarianship (librarians) in carrying out their duties where they work, which provides guidelines for behavior that can avoid unprofessional actions (Suwarno, 2016). In other words, the code of ethics requires the application of ethics that every individual instinctively has.

Considering the importance of the librarian's code of ethics, Suwarno (2016) presented a brief history of the librarian's code of ethics. The code of ethics for librarians first appeared in the West in a 1903 paper at the Pratt Institute for Library School. In this case, Mary A Pummer in (Feather & Sturges, 1997) stated that doctors, lawyers, ministers, professors, and military employees generally have a code of ethics that binds them. In 1939, the code of conduct was in full in the ALA Bulletin consists of five major sections, namely: (i) The relationship between the librarian and the government; (ii) The relationship between librarians and users; (iii) The relationship between the librarian and the staff in the library; (iv) The relationship between the librarian and the profession; (v) The relationship between the librarian and the community.

The code of ethics for librarians in Indonesia was born after going through various developments for twenty years through congresses held in various cities (Suwarno, 2016). The Indonesian Librarian Association (IPI) realizes the need for a code of ethics as an essential behavioral guide for its members in carrying out their duties in society.

The Indonesian Librarian Code of Ethics has substance described in the various obligations that librarians have, namely the relationship with individuals described in the essential attitude of librarians, users, between librarians, libraries, professional organizations, and with the community (Suwarno, 2016). The Indonesian librarian's code of ethics set by IPI sets out the essential attitudes of librarians, namely: (i) Strive to carry out tasks by society's general expectations and the needs of library users in particular; (ii) Strive to maintain the superiority of competence as high as possible and be obliged to follow developments; (iii) Trying to distinguish between the views or attitudes of personal life and professional duties; (iv) Ensuring that his actions and decisions come from professional judgment; (v) Not abusing position by taking advantage except for professional services; (vi) Be polite and wise in serving the community in speech and deeds (Suwarno, 2016).

## 2. METHODS

This type of research uses descriptive research with a qualitative approach. Descriptive research aims to describe systematically, factually, and accurately the facts and characteristics of a particular object or population (Sinulingga, 2011). Qualitative Research, according to Sugiyono (2009) is a type of research in which data collection is carried out in a natural setting primary data source and plays a more significant role in observation as well as in-depth interviews and documentation. The informants in this study were four librarians at the Medan City Library and Archives Service. Informant retrieval technique using a purposive sampling technique. The researcher determines the sampling by setting specific characteristics according to the research focus. Data collection techniques through observation, interviews, and literature studies. Presenting the Data analysis in this study in 3 (three) stages, namely data reduction, data presentation, and conclusions.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 3.1 Strive to carry out tasks according to the needs of users

As a public service, all behavior and processes that occur in the library should be user-oriented (Suwarno, 2016). The excellent service provided by librarians is expected by users in general so that they feel valued and cared for by librarians. In this case, the librarian should be able to function as an intermediary between information sources and users. For example, they seek information from various sources and distribute it for users' benefit. The interviews with librarians below show efforts to carry out tasks according to user needs.

"Trying as much as possible for their convenience in receiving our services, trying to meet their needs, if there is none we will provide on the next visit." (I.1). From the description of the informant above, it is related to trying to carry out tasks according to the needs of users through ethics. Separating ethics is a no go from the behavioral elements inherent in humans, such as librarians. Librarians provide full service to users outside the library who will feel comfortable finding the information they need.

"We look directly to the readers about what information they need so they do not get confused about where the book is. The point is to carry out the best service." (I.2)

"If there is a need for the user, we provide it, we direct it when we become a member of the library, we provide the best

service for the user, we also have a mobile library, there is a request from our school to visit the place." (I.3)

"Providing instructions and information needed by the user so that the user is satisfied with what we provide and serves the user well so that the user is satisfied, if outside activities, we provide containers such as mats and a collection of books..." (I. 4)

From the informants' descriptions above, the obligation to carry out tasks according to users' needs is to provide good service. Librarians try to carry out their duties as well as possible and pay attention to users' needs. In general, the librarian's job is to serve the public. This means that all behaviors and processes that occur in the library should be user-oriented. Dragovich, the head of the Regional Resources Information Officer, said to listen to the users (Suwarno, 2016). So, the selling point of the library lies in good service. This good service is what the general public expects so that they feel valued, respected, and cared for by the librarian.

Thus, carrying out tasks according to user needs by providing exemplary service by paying attention to users' needs will reflect a librarian's professionalism.

### **3.2 Striving to Maintain Competency Advantage**

Librarians as a profession are required to improve their knowledge skills through various activities, such as attending seminars, workshops, or training in the field of librarianship. They can see the efforts to maintain these competencies in the results of the researcher's interviews with the following informants:

"Participating in seminars, workshops and discussions about the work of librarians to increase the ability and knowledge of competence in the field of libraries." (I.1)

"Continue to learn to increase knowledge of librarian competencies, and participate in discussions at seminars or workshops from writers or experts in the field of libraries to increase competency knowledge." (I.2)

"Maintaining the superior competence possessed by librarians by following technological developments and knowledge in the field of libraries through seminars, reading books and attending training." (I.3)

"Following training activities on the competence of librarians in the field of developing library materials, for example, how to process procurement, processing, borrowing in an automated/digital manner." (1.4)

From the informants' descriptions above, to strive to maintain superior competence, librarians continue to learn to keep up with the current developments by participating in various activities such as librarian certification, seminars, workshops, and training. Librarians are required to improve their performance and competence to become qualified librarians. They can make various efforts, both individually and collectively, formally and informally. (Hermawan & Zen, 2006). Today's users need a fast, precise, and convenient service. If the librarian cannot provide good service, the librarian and the library will be left behind. Therefore, the ability of librarians to keep up with existing developments is absolute. Librarians must have the ability, knowledge, and skills to carry out work and provide services to users.

The conclusion is, to maintain a competitive advantage, the informants learn a lot by participating in various activities and training such as seminars, workshops, training, and the like. Based on the observations of the researchers, the librarians of the Medan City Library and Archives Service are active in sharing seminars, training, and workshop activities both at user education events and fostering school, village, and reading garden libraries.

### **3.3 Striving to Maintain Competency Advantage**

A librarian must behave professionally in carrying out his duties. Librarians must be able to distinguish between personal interests and professional duties. The following are the results of interviews with informants regarding efforts to determine the views of individual attitudes and professional duties.

"I try not to involve family matters at work. When I work as a librarian, I must carry out my duties properly." (I.1)

"We as humans whom Allah SWT gives reason and thoughts must be able to distinguish between personal and professional matters at work according to our profession as librarians. We serve visitors who come to the library, outside of our work as individuals in the family and society..." (I.2)

"Differentiating the person from this profession is following the conditions of our circumstances, at home our role as a person, for example, me as a housewife for my family and while at work as a professional librarian who carries out duties as a librarian serving the visitors who visit the library." (I.3)

"We have to be professional. When we are at home, we do not bring our profession. When we are in our office as librarians, we must provide good service to users by not involving personal matters with the profession in our work." (I.4)

From the descriptions of the informants above, to try to distinguish the views of personal attitudes and professional duties, librarians must be proficient in carrying out their work. Librarians must be able to differentiate between individual decisions and professional duties. As professionals, librarians can balance their interests with professional duties in daily life. A librarian who carries out work according to his expertise must possess a professional attitude. In conclusion, with the view of personal attitudes and professional duties, librarians can divide between personal and professional duties so that the services provided to users will run well.

### **3.4 Base on that actions of professional judgment**

With the advancement of the library, it is increasingly demanding that Indonesian librarians carry out their work professionally and pay attention to the community's information needs. Based on the following results from the researcher's interviews with informants regarding ensuring that on professional considerations.

"Trying to be better in providing information services to users by carrying out tasks professionally based on the expertise and knowledge of the librarian through education, seminars, and training." (I.1)

"Yes, carry out tasks professionally by working and serving the users as well as possible based on the knowledge and expertise of the librarian so that the users feel happy." (I.2)

"Yes, as a professional librarian must be based on knowledge in carrying out daily tasks." (I.3)

"Yes, professionals carry out tasks based on knowledge and expertise according to their competencies, such as procurement of library materials, processing library materials, and classifying library materials." (I.4)

Explanation from the informants' descriptions above, action decisions are based on professional considerations with the librarian's knowledge. Considering the work carried out requires unique abilities such as processing and classifying library materials which need skills in book numbering and providing good service to users. As a librarian with a significant role in providing services to the community, it should not miss out on information. Maintaining



reciprocal communication between librarians and users increases excellent service to users who need library services. So, librarians are required to continue to develop their potential.

Thus, it is related to ensuring that actions are based on professional considerations and that the work carried out is based on abilities so that visitors get good service. To do things professionally is to obey the rules, be responsible for the job in their field and work to the best of their ability. In addition, with the mastery of knowledge, skills, and responsibilities towards work, librarians are expected to be able to improve librarian professionalism.

### **3.5 Do not abuse position by taking advantage except for professional services**

This obligation intends not to take advantage of except for professional services. Librarians must work honestly and not abuse their position by taking advantage of work for professional assistance. In implementing this obligation, the informants have the following views:

"There is no use of office facilities for personal interests, and all office-related facilities are only used for operational office activities." (I.1)

"There is no taking advantage of using office facilities personally. Office facilities provided are only to carry out work operationally." (I.2)

"There is no use of office facilities for personal gain. I often work with my laptop to carry out office work and the interests of the user if there is something I want to ask." (1.3)

"There is no use of office facilities for personal gain. In office work, I often use my facilities from home for work operations, such as laptops, printers and data packages." (1.4)

From the description above, to avoid abusing their position by taking advantage of professional services, refrain from utilizing the facilities provided because of their work for personal gain. Based on the researcher's observations during the study, no one saw the use of office facilities for personal interests on professional assignments. Be loyal in work by utilizing private facilities to benefit all society. Librarians are rewarded not for submitting to their superiors but for loyalty to their duties. Loyalty to work is a form of librarian loyalty to the profession.

Thus, from the descriptions of the informants above, it can be concluded that to avoid abusing their position by taking advantage of professional services, the librarian of the Medan City Library and Archives Service does not take advantage of office facilities for personal interests. Librarians work honestly and avoid misuse of the profession in their duties.

## **4. CONCLUSION**

The conclusions of this study are as follows: (i) The basic attitude of the librarian is essential to be carried out by a librarian, the librarian's code of ethics guides librarians in carrying out their duties and responsibilities as well as possible; (ii) Librarians of the Medan City Library and Archives Service carry out tasks according to user needs by providing exemplary service by paying attention to users' needs. (iii) Librarians of the Medan City Library and Archives Service strive to maintain competency excellence through various activities and training such as seminars, workshops, training and the like, both in user education activities and in fostering school, village and reading garden libraries. (iv) The librarian of the Medan City Library and Archives Service seeks to distinguish the views of personal attitudes and professional duties so that the services provided to users run well. (v) The Medan City Library and Archives Service librarian takes action based on professional considerations by obeying the rules and being responsible for work in their fields. (vi) The Medan City Library and Archives Service librarian does not abuse his position. Librarians do not take advantage of office facilities for personal interests and avoid abuse of the profession in their duties.

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