



The Implementation of Blended Librarian Skill at UPI Library as a Form of Librarian Professionalism Attitude in the Information Technology Era

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ABSTRACT	ARTICLE INFO
<p>The emergence of information technology resulted in science becoming increasingly rapidly growing. Along with the increasing and adaptive capabilities and needs of users, they tend to want all information easily and quickly. This has implications and demands for greater changes in the role of librarians at the Indonesian University of Education (UPI) library. The Blended Librarian concept is an adaptation of the librarian's role as an educator as well as a collaborator in a university environment. In addition, the application of Blended Librarian Skills describes librarians as academic partners who collaborate with educators and academics in supporting the Tri Dharma of Higher Education, namely education and teaching, research, and community service. The research method was conducted by interviewing librarians at the UPI Library. The findings in the form of the effectiveness of the application of the Blended Librarian concept in the UPI Library include the competence of managers, mediators, and educators in improving the quality of librarian professionalism. Librarians collaborate proactively in advancing the teaching and learning process. Blended librarian skills become the urgency of the librarian's professionalism in realizing instructional design for learning in the information technology era.</p> <p>© 2023 Edulib</p>	<p>Article History: <i>Submitted/Received 10 Jan, 2023</i> <i>First Revised 24 Jan, 2023</i> <i>Accepted 24 Feb, 2023</i> <i>First online 07 Mar, 2023</i> <i>Publication date 31 May, 2023</i></p> <hr/> <p>Keyword: <i>Blended librarian skill,</i> <i>Information Technologies,</i> <i>Professionals library,</i></p>

1. INTRODUCTION

University libraries are academic institutions that are known for their dynamic approach in providing services to their patrons. These libraries must adhere to national standards encompassing collection management, infrastructure, services, personnel, organization, and the management of higher education libraries. They are expected to facilitate the learning process encompassing the threefold mission of higher education: education, research, and community service. Furthermore, they play a pivotal role in enhancing the academic environment. This aligns with the Regulation of the Head of the National Library No. 13 of 2017, which outlines the National Standards for Higher Education Libraries. The scope of this regulation applies to both public and private higher education libraries, including universities, institutes, colleges, academies, and polytechnics. The evolving landscape of education and learning in higher education institutions necessitates adaptability. Institutions strive to enhance the quality of education they offer, resulting in dynamic changes. In this competitive environment, the role of academic librarians becomes crucial. They must adapt to changes in the educational delivery system, harness and innovate with educational technologies, and meet evolving educational needs.

A concept to elevate librarian competence, known as the "Blended Librarian," has emerged. This innovative approach involves collaboration between librarians, lecturers, and IT staff in the execution of learning and academic activities. According to [de Lima \(2017\)](#), the Blended Librarian concept strategically addresses the utilization of technological products and innovations in education and learning. Similarly, [Oktaviana, D. \(2020\)](#), defines the Blended Librarian as a term within the library field, emphasizing attention to users' information needs. The Blended Librarian approach encompasses collaboration with lecturers and IT staff in higher education settings. They not only provide educational support but also serve as academic collaborators, making them indispensable academic partners. [Putri, G. R. \(2019\)](#), elaborates on the term "Blended Librarian" as an academic librarian equipped with diverse knowledge in curriculum matters, research issues, university and college library accreditation, university rankings, and expertise in information technology. This knowledge is applied in crafting effective learning designs and conducting efficient information searches.

There are several studies related to the application of blended librarian skills as a form of librarian professionalism in the era of information technology, namely in research with the title "Implementation of Blended Librarian in the Digital Era (Case Study at the Library of Muhammadiyah University of Yogyakarta)" this research focuses on how the implementation of blended librarians in the digital era at the Library of Muhammadiyah University of Yogyakarta and in writing the article it is hoped that it can provide an overview of the role of blended librarians in meeting the information needs of students in the digital era at the Library of Muhammadiyah University of Yogyakarta ([Qurotianti, 2020](#)). Meanwhile, another study entitled "Blended Skills for Academic Librarians in Facing the Industrial Revolution Era" focuses on how the competence of academic librarians in facing the 4.0 industrial revolution in order to compete in the global era ([Naibaho, 2020](#)). In research with the title "Application of Blended Librarian in the Digital Age (Case Study at the Library of Muhammadiyah University of Yogyakarta)" using qualitative research using the case study method. And in research with the title "Blended Skills for Academic Librarians in Facing the Industrial Revolution Era" using the literature review method. What distinguishes this research from other studies is the object of research and the data collection process. In this study, the object of research is the Indonesian Education University Library with the

data collection process, namely by interviewing one of the librarians at the Indonesian Education University Library. Based on the explanation above, this research aims to examine the following two problem formulations: (i) How is the application of the concept of Blended Librarian Skills at UPT Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia in 3 concepts (manager, mediator, and educator)?; (ii) The urgency of Blended Librarian Skills competencies for academic librarians in the era of information technology.

A blended librarian is a librarian in the academic field who combines traditional librarian skills and expertise with information technology capabilities such as mastery of hardware or software in managing systems and activities in the library. Blended librarians also need to have the ability to design an information technology-based teaching to support the learning and teaching process. The development of technology continues to grow rapidly, giving various impacts on various fields. Education is currently trying to combine learning and teaching by utilizing technology. The rapid changes and developments in technology in the field of education require educational institutions to utilize existing technology, namely by utilizing technological devices, technological media, and electronic-based resources. The use and utilization of technology in the field of education requires librarians to have expertise in technology and act as educators who teach the use of technology for learning, teaching, and research needs (Andayani, 2018). Therefore, the writing of this article is important to discuss because the current reality requires the assistance of librarians in supporting the learning, teaching, and research processes. Thus, writing this article can provide insight or new views and knowledge on the importance of the role of librarians today (blended librarians) who are required to understand the use of technology and teach technological skills to members of the university environment.

2. METHODS

This research uses a type of qualitative research. Qualitative research is a research process to retrieve information by looking at the actual conditions in the field directly which are then linked to solving problems either theoretically or practically (Nawawi, in Hoeroestijati, 2019). The research method used in this research is the case study method with the aim that the research can be done in depth. Case study is a research method that is carried out in depth and thoroughly about an event, environment, and situation at a certain time in order to understand something (Qurotianti, 2020). In case study research, researchers will examine the problem of "Blended Librarian Skill" by conducting observation activities at the Indonesian Education University Library to find out firsthand how the application of blended librarian skills.

In this study, to obtain information, researchers will conduct interviews directly with UPI librarians. The research procedure was carried out by making a list of questions for interview activities. The question material is made based on three main components of blended librarian skills including Manager, Mediator, and Educator where from each component there are several indicators as question material.

The research procedure was carried out by making questions related to the application of blended librarian skills at the UPI Library. Then the question will be used for interview activities carried out in a structured manner to one of the UPI librarians randomly selected as an informant.

The results of the interview will later be analyzed qualitatively, starting from research data collection activities, reducing data, then making conclusions (Qurotianti, 2020).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Interview Results Regarding the Application of Blended Librarian Skill Manager

Are all library staff members able to optimize ICT for activities and services in the library, or is it only the librarians?

In the UPI library, librarians have been able to optimize the use of ICT, which means that librarians at UPI have good competence in the use of information technology. While library staff and personnel other than librarians are mostly senior staff who have difficulty understanding computerization in the library, so that library staff perform manual and conventional tasks and activities in the library.

In educational institutions, librarians are one of the professional groups that have a stake in ensuring the achievement of educational goals. Especially in higher education, the role of librarians is very strategic, where the need for literature that supports the implementation of the curriculum is highly dependent on librarians. So in this case, librarians in the UPI library provide the effectiveness of applying blended librarian skills by optimizing ICT well in meeting the needs of users and in managing information.

Is the human resources in the UPI Library considered sufficient to meet the needs for managing data such as acquisition or classification?

In this case, Librarians at UPI all have a master's degree. So that the ability to classify, acquire and develop collections is good.

Does UPI Library organize collaborative learning activities among librarians for specific events, such as a learning commons?

UPI Library routinely organizes in-house training every year for librarians and library staff by adjusting the competencies and needs required. UPI Library conducts in-house training 2-4 times a year following the budget issued by the library. So that this IHT will be carried out differently every year to improve the competence and the need for training needed by librarians and library staff.

To what extent has the UPI Library successfully managed and organized resources to meet the needs of its students?

On a national scale, UPI library is already superior compared to other university libraries. So that at the national level, UPI library is good. While on an international scale it is still not, because there is no standard.

What are the obstacles or challenges in meeting the needs of users?

There are several difficulties faced by UPI librarians in fulfilling the needs of library users. From the results of the interview, our informant specifically said that one of the obstacles that UPI librarians often experience is translating student needs. Because information sources in the library itself have been provided in various places, the subject of the collection subscribed to is quite large and complete both from printed and non-print collections. However, to translate student needs for information is quite difficult. Because based on the observations of UPI librarians, most UPI students have not cultivated asking librarians. Where when they want to find information, they tend to look for it themselves in the OPAC then look for it on the collection rack and when they don't find the collection, they will just ask but the questions they give are not specific. The students are still reluctant to communicate with librarians, for example, until now UPI librarians have never provided reference interview services specifically with the users because none of the users want to ask or have the initiative to ask the librarians. In addition to the absence of users who want

to ask, the lack of knowledge about the function of librarians in higher education is one of the main obstacles for librarians in translating library needs for information.

Mediator

Does the library provide facilities for patrons to connect with references outside of UPI's library?

Overall, the UPI library has provided facilities so that users can connect with other references outside the library. Currently the UPI library has collaborated with several library organizations including the Higher Education Library Forum, the National State University Communication Forum, and cooperation carried out outside the organization. Even one of the administrators comes from the UPI library. The West Java FFPTI has a chairman who comes from UPI. So in essence, librarians in UPI libraries have become part of librarian organizations in Indonesia, so that UPI libraries have a fairly wide network. In addition, officially the UPI library has collaborated with the National Library, the Ministry of Education and Culture Library, and also SEAMEO which is part of the UPI library's collaboration in collecting Resources. Where from all the results of the program cooperation, it can be used by all users, especially for students to find information for their academic needs. Based on the results of the interview, the UPI library has collaborated and participated in several library organizations to increase the library network as a bridge of information outside the UPI library for users.

It should be noted that cooperation between libraries is very important. Because through this collaboration the library will get more information sources both in terms of quantity, type or media used so that the increasing information needs of users can be met as much as possible (Stiawan & Kurniawan, 2019).

Do librarians play a role in assisting patrons to submit scholarly articles to the best journals?

UPI Library provides reference services to provide consultation and guidance services related to journal publishing and reference according to the needs of users. However, since there are still many users who are unaware of the existence of reference services because they never ask or consult with librarians, this often leads to the perception that the library does not help users in providing reference services and consultation regarding journal publishing. However, based on the results of observations, overall UPI libraries have librarians in charge of reference services to provide consultation services about references for users.

This is considered in line with the opinion of Naibaho (Naibaho, 2020), that it is the main task for academic librarians, especially the reference service section, to help academicians, both students and lecturers, to achieve goals with the term "academic achievements" for them, for example, such as helping students work on their final assignments so that they can graduate on time with a good GPA, succeed in helping publish scientific articles in the best journals, and provide facilities as a form of support in improving the quality of academic research results.

Educator

Have librarians at the UPI Library provided training in information literacy?

For librarians, they are usually included in training activities or seminars. Before the webinar activity, UPI librarians would be sent for information literacy training activities which were usually held by FPPTI. Meanwhile, currently librarians more often participate in

webinar activities to improve their information literacy skills. And for users, the library usually holds information literacy classes once a year, where the learning content usually consists of basic information literacy materials including library-level information literacy and basic information literacy.

A blended librarian is required to master and understand the use of research tools. How do UPI librarians discover useful research tools for users? Are there specific indicators to determine which research tools will be used in the UPI library?

Based on the results of interviews with librarians at the UPI Library, the answer to the question regarding research tools in the UPI Library is "Examples of research tools are such as scopus, Turnitin, and DDC. For the UPI library, it has been implemented and carried out by the UPI Library except for scopus. This is because UPI still does not consider that Scopus and WOS are a necessity for civitas in conducting their research. So, the decision is not in the library but in UPI to subscribe. Scopus and WOS are more like indexers, where when an institution subscribes, the data released by them when indexing is easier to obtain, both those produced by the institution. For example, how many lecturers who write will be indexed in Scopus and how many lecturers who write in WOS will be indexed too. This is the easiest to obtain than not subscribing. But it goes back to the university's decision. Turnitin is more of a plagiarism checker. UPI Library has subscribed to Turnitin for quite a long time and is included in the first line of Turnitin customers. So, UPI Library gets a lot of special facilities from Turnitin. And for DDC, basic DDC is made part of basic information literacy every year, which UPI librarians give to new students. Of these three things, the UPI library has done this. For indexers, it can be done or directed by librarians, but currently UPI librarians cannot do and direct. This is because assistance in writing scientific papers or articles and how to publish them at UPI has not involved the library. And there are not many who see that this is a job done by librarians."

Based on the explanation from the UPI librarian. Overall, it can be said that librarians at UPI Library have found research tools that are useful for users and set indicators to determine research tools that will be used in UPI libraries based on the needs of users and librarians. This is in accordance with the role of a blended librarian, where an academic librarian needs to combine traditional librarian skills and expertise with information technology skills and expertise such as the use of hardware and software as well as the need to have communication skills (Andayani, 2018). Librarians need to understand information technology, because currently a blended librarian is needed in helping the academic community to be able to publish a scientific work. In the process of writing to publishing scientific papers using research tools owned by the UPI Library, ranging from mendeley as research data management in scientific writing, turnitin for plagiarism checkers on scientific papers, and DDC to classify scientific papers based on their field of knowledge. Universities need to work with librarians or libraries to be able to create a paper that requires these research tools which later use these research tools can support the publication of a scientific paper. In addition, universities need to work with librarians or libraries because the task of a librarian is to communicate and convey the scientific work, package, present, and distribute the results of the scientific work into digital form which of course is the task of a blended librarian who understands the use of hardware and software and also understands the use of technology.

Therefore, based on the exposure of librarians at the UPI Library, it can be said that they already have the skills to use and utilize technology in accordance with the skills that a blended librarian needs to have, such as understanding and using research tools by UPI

librarians. It's just that in writing scientific papers or articles and publishing these works, the UPI Library has not involved a UPI librarian because it has not realized that these activities are work carried out by a person starting from helping lecturers or writers to package, present, access, and distribute the results of writing scientific papers into digital resources which will be useful for supporting the teaching and learning process activities as well as research for universities.

How do UPI librarians provide education about open access to users?

Based on the results of an interview with one of the librarians at the UPI Library, the answer to the question regarding open access education at the UPI Library is "UPI librarians always provide information about open access, but it depends on those who ask and those who participate in socialization. So if you don't follow the UPI Library's social media, don't ask the librarian, and don't participate in the socialization that the UPI Library holds, then the users will not know about the open access. UPI librarians have made webinar activities regarding open access in the past 2 or 3 years, it has been routinely carried out related to open access. In addition, UPI Library has Calista which is an open information literacy class service whose contents contain information that can be accessed freely by users".

Based on the explanation from the UPI librarian, overall it can be said that the librarian at the UPI Library has provided education about open access to users. This is in accordance with the duties of a blended librarian in meeting user information needs. To be able to fulfill user information needs, a blended librarian needs to: (i) Plan and identify the information needs of a user which includes information resources both print and digital materials, training in managing the library, and guidance with users. (ii) Fulfill the right information needs from the right sources for users, conduct promotions, and conduct information literacy activities. (iii) Integration by utilizing social media, university web and university applications. (iv) Online reference guidance and consultation. (v) The role of an academic librarian as a blended librarian is to provide education based on the utilization of technological products and innovations to support learning needs. Librarians are not just a support system, but librarians are also academic collaborators in various educational and scientific activities of higher education (Qurotianti, 2020).

Informing open access to users is one of the roles of an academic librarian as a blended librarian. Librarians need to demonstrate the role of an academic librarian in the teaching and learning process in higher education. This can be done by providing education and information about open access, these activities are part of the role of an academic librarian because open access services are carried out for the needs of research and knowledge by providing full unlimited access. This open access activity can also eliminate barriers to accessing a literature source. Open access allows users who need information sources and knowledge about a particular field of science to download, copy, access, and also print the information sources needed by users (Saufa & Hidayah, 2018). Therefore, activities to provide education about open access to users are the role of an academic librarian as a blended librarian, where librarians support user activities to be able to fulfill information sources in certain fields of science in supporting learning activities.

How do UPI librarians educate users, such as UPI students, about plagiarism prevention?

Based on the results of interviews with librarians at the UPI Library, the answer to the question regarding education in the prevention of plagiarism or plagiarism is "For education to avoid plagiarism, UPI librarians do it limited to campaigns. The campaign is limited to publishing posters both on social media and in print. Although the content is included in the

training on the use of Turnitin. So indeed for Turnitin training, UPI Library routinely holds it at least once a year, both for operators and students and the content includes how to avoid plagiarism. The mechanism for using Turnitin for students is to use the operators in their respective faculties or study programs, so they don't do it themselves. But you have to contact the operator. Students need to contact the operator because the account owned by UPI is limited, UPI is limited to 1500 accounts that can only be used up with lecturers. With the limited account, UPI librarians cannot give the account to students. So that librarians if they want to use Turnitin need to contact the operator."

Based on the explanation from the UPI librarian, Mrs. Dian Arya Susanti, S.Sos., M. T. overall, it can be said that librarians at the UPI Library have provided education about plagiarism prevention to users. This is in accordance with the role of academic librarians as blended librarians. Academic librarians as blended librarians in higher education are directed to be able to assist lecturers as well as students in achieving "academic achievements" such as graduating on time with a high GPA, successfully publishing scientific work in international journals, and supporting the improvement of university research (Naibaho, 2020).

In line with the education provided by the UPI library to prevent plagiarism to users, the activity of publishing scientific work in international journals certainly has a strong relationship with plagiarism. Journals published in international journals certainly have a minimum qualification (%) of plagiarism when checked using turnitin. This is related to the role of an academic librarian as a blended librarian who is literate in information technology updates that have hard skills and soft skills, as well as a blended librarian who participates in assisting teachers in providing innovative learning processes that involve the application of information technology. An example of the application of information technology is turnitin to check the level of plagiarism of scientific papers made by students. In addition, blended librarians also assist in the publication of scientific papers as previously described and this is also included in the role of an academic librarian as a blended librarian to assist in publishing scientific papers and distributing them in digital form, which requires information technology skills that can be found in blended librarians.

How do UPI librarians choose the right search engine to be used as a means of information retrieval? And how do librarians convey information to users about the latest developments in the field of search engines?

Based on the results of interviews with librarians at the UPI Library, the answer to the question regarding the selection of the right search engine to be used as a means of searching for information and how librarians convey information to users about the latest developments in the field of search engines is "The means of conveying information carried out by UPI librarians, have tried to be as effective as possible. Whether it's through interactive services owned by the UPI Library, such as whatsapp that can be asked directly to the librarian, talk to with the librarian's question and answer facility, you can interactively ask questions at that time even though you don't come to the library. UPI librarians also disseminate information through social media which is always updated with information, at least UPI librarians update their information twice a week related to various matters including those related to information literacy. So it not only provides information about activities carried out at the UPI Library but also includes information literacy. Also included in information literacy classes, UPI librarians provide information related to search. UPI librarians have tried various effective ways, but even though we often disseminate information, it goes back to whether the information is spread or not, what

percentage of students get the information which requires further research. For information dissemination UPI librarians use social media, websites, whatsapp, and talk to which have not been widely used by libraries".

Based on the explanation of the UPI librarian, Mrs. Dian Arya Susanti, S.Sos., M. T. overall, it can be said that librarians at the UPI Library have chosen the right search engine to be used as a means of searching for information and the way librarians convey information to users about the latest developments in the field of search engines can be said to be good. This is in accordance with the role of academic librarians as blended librarians must be able to combine with skills and knowledge in the field of information and communication technology, besides that academic librarians as blended librarians also play a role in improving the student learning process (Qurotianti, 2020). By choosing the right search engine to use as a means of searching for information and the way librarians convey information to users about the latest developments in the search engine field, it can affect the level of fulfillment of user information needs. Students usually use search engines as a means of searching for information, namely to complete assignments and so on related to the learning process. So that the role of teaching librarians as blended librarians in search engine facilities has an impact on the success of students in completing their assignments which are included in the learning process accompanied by information and communication technology facilitated by academic librarians as blended librarians because they have skills and skills in this field.

The Importance of Blended Librarian Skills for Academic Librarians in the Era of Information Technology

The role of blended librarian skills in academic librarians in the era of information technology or the digital era, academic librarians are required to be able to carry out changes in tasks and roles from technical tasks to innovative services by paying attention to technological developments. Academic librarians in the era of information technology need to create a service that is able to compete with other libraries, so that the library becomes a reference center and destination in activities that require research and research. In the era of information technology, the role of academic librarians as blended librarians encompasses several key responsibilities: (i) Provide digital content on an ongoing basis Digital collections available in the library must be continuously updated, this is supported by the number of lecturers and students who publish scientific papers; (ii) Develop services that support research, teaching and learning activities. Academic librarians as blended librarians can redevelop services that support research, teaching and learning activities. For example, developing repository services, open access services, plagiarism check services, and so on; (iii) Managing digital projects. Academic librarians as blended librarians are required to be able to manage digital projects, such as developing web-based services and developing library services to be more widely accessible to users; (iv) Collaborating with academic institutions with the aim of becoming partners in research that supports the research, teaching and learning process. The cooperation that can be done by academic librarians as blended librarians is that they can work with parties who know IT much more deeply than academic librarians as blended librarians. This cooperation can be done by providing training and socialization on the development of information technology related to research, teaching, and learning such as how to subscribe to national and international

journals, reference tools such as mendeley and zotero, plagiarism tools such as turnitin, and so on (Andayani, 2018).

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the discussion, it can be concluded that Librarians at the Indonesian Education University have met the needs and competencies in the application of blended librarians at the Indonesian Education University library. UPI Librarians have implemented the role of managers in the library by optimizing data management and services, as well as training librarians with Learning Commons. In the role of Mediator, UPI Librarians become a liaison between library users and information needs and collaborate with other libraries to facilitate and improve the fulfillment of library users' needs in outside sources. In addition, UPI librarians are competent in the role of educators by collaborating with IT teachers and academics to support information literacy and the preparation of teaching materials with a focus on improving the quality of students in digital skills and knowledge research and education to avoid plagiarism with turnitin in writing student scientific papers.

To complete the research that the author has made regarding the application of blended librarian skills in the UPI library is still very concise. Therefore, in the future research on the application of blended librarian skills can be developed from the perspective of library users in order to obtain more efficient and relevant results towards optimizing the role of blended librarians in University libraries.

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