

THE FUTURE OF LIBRARIANSHIP PROFESSION IN THE ERA OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

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Abstrak

Teknologi informasi dan komunikasi telah melahirkan perubahan global terhadap perilaku masyarakat seantero dunia. Hal ini ditandai dengan arus informasi dan komunikasi yang tak terbendungkan oleh kelompok masyarakat manapun sekalipun mereka adalah pelaku dan pencetus informasi tersebut. Proses ini menjadi suatu proses kehidupan bagi seluruh masyarakat, khususnya pustakawan sebagai pelaku atau provider informasi. Pengaruh positif dan negatifnya telah menjadi bagian yang tak terpisahkan di kalangan masyarakat. Berangkat dari fenomena tersebut, tulisan ini mencoba untuk mengeksplorasi tentang masa depan pustakawan dan kepastakawanan dalam menghadapi situasi semacam ini. Oleh karena itu, tema tersebut menarik untuk dicermati untuk melihat secara dekat bagaimana fakta-fakta kepastakawanan di era informasi dan komunikasi tersebut agar dapat dipelajari oleh pustakawan untuk mengambil suatu pandangan tentang peluang dan tantangan yang dihadapi oleh mereka sebagai profesional (pekerja) informasi di masa yang akan datang.

Keywords: Librarianship, Profession, Information Technology, ICT

A. Introduction

The development of information and communication around the world, which has been triggered by highly technological devices, has brought about challenge and opportunity for librarianship profession. Therefore, librarians should be aware that they have to equip themselves with knowledge and skills to encounter such situation. They have to be capable of playing the technology in relation to their profession as information providers and this is of course a way to be able to manage information. It is undoubtedly believed that people only

appreciate the libraries if their needs can be well served. Thus, such circumstances can be used as an opportunity for librarians to prove that they have skills and abilities to work professionally to fulfill the people's needs of information.

Therefore, it is important to demonstrate the performance of people who are involved in the field of information and communication technology which try to serve the information to all people without any bias to any group or person. Another important thing to show is that this profession pertains to the efforts of improving or increasing the satisfaction of information users. It seems to me that most librarians have often overlooked this aspect because of their technical activities, such as cataloging processes. As a result, it contributes to the negative perspectives of users towards library services and librarians' performance.

In such circumstances, it is here important to note that the librarians should rethink and reconstruct their basic concept of information to encounter the negative perspectives. This article, therefore, tries to describe and analyze several things relating to some facts of librarianship existence in the modern information world. Besides, the writer will also look at several opinions, which attempt to argue that librarians have faced many challenges and barriers to survive in this globalization of information and communication. On the other hand, there are also several important opportunities that can be carefully utilized by librarians in order to be competent to play roles in the information environment.

Furthermore, it is crucial to be aware of, by librarians, that Indonesian people are generally not informed well about the existence and roles of libraries among people, including academic societies. It is extremely exaggerated by the uncared-for by librarians themselves to the existing phenomena. This, certainly, has contributed to worsen the image of librarians, and then to libraries.

B. Empirical Facts of Librarianship

1. Professional context

Librarians all over the world should have responsibilities and be aware of their importance as key roles in developing libraries to be learning centers for all levels of society. In order to do so, they must have skills and expertise that enable them to handle libraries professionally. It is unavoidable that professionalism is a must for whoever, particularly librarians, is engaged in the information and communication activities. If such environment can be achieved, the people or users will find their needs of information easily and this is of course a way to promote the importance of libraries among them. Therefore, the librarians should be having capabilities to the knowledge of information technology which is expected to become a moment providing a significant chance to get back the attraction of the societies towards the works of libraries as information provider. Through this knowledge, the development of information access can be optimal.

Library managers therefore should pay attention on two aspects of the capabilities so that the problems of librarians can be solved professionally. Another important thing is to make librarians aware that the on-going process of libraries could not be separated from their profession. They should have a commitment to continue their study. On a daily basis there is a need to develop creative ways to find and deliver information. Librarians need to keep abreast of current technological trends and how best to use them.¹ Thus, librarians should be continuously updating their skills to fit the changing of the information world. The responsibility not only belongs to the employer but also to professionals as well. Without continuous education, information professionals will be having a lack of abilities to stay current and will be left behind by accelerating changes. Library education program is one possible source of continuing education

¹ Augustine Birrell. *Librarws are not iMade: They Grow*, <http://istweb.syr.edu/21/stcenlib/who/public>, html: 15-12-2005.

opportunities. The library education programs are likewise responsible for dynamically responding to these challenges brought about by changing needs and opportunity.²

2. Insecurity of the Librarianship Profession

There are several arguments showing the insecurity of American Library Association (ALA) in 1876. Rubin states that it was an important guidepost that the creations of the ALA substantially increase professional identity and provide librarianship with an identity outside the profession. However, that point of view of the founder of the ALA implies that the librarianship profession did not have an enough identity either inside or outside of the profession.

Encountering this situation, the ALA was needed to increase professional identity. As Rubin implies that the founders thought that the current professional identity was somehow lacking. Librarians at the time, impressed with the idea of being represented by their new professional association, may not have noticed the implied insult to their self-image, but simply internalized the idea that their profession was not really a suitable identity. After the existence of the ALA, their profession would be more valued. However, this argument seems to reinforce the idea that the profession was somehow not producing an acceptable self-image and was not already valued before the emergence of the ALA.

Another possibility as to an initial source of librarianship profession insecurity is Melvil Dewey. He was considered a prime force in the librarianship professionalism. He contributed hugely to the field of librarianship. On the other hand, he may also have contributed to the lack of a secure self-image when he wrote “the time has come when a librarian may without assumption speak of this occupation as a profession”. Although he seemed to be trying to promote librarianship as a profession, his statement implies that for some unnamed

² Kevin Starr, *The Future of Librarianship*, <http://www.cla-net.org/pubs/future.html>: 15-12-

reasons, before that time had come, librarians could not acknowledge their occupation as a profession.³

3. Stereotypical Image of the Librarianship Profession

It is very important to understand about the flow of real image to the librarianship profession. In 1980s, there was a particular column, for several years, focused solely on the image of librarians as a prime example of the obsessive nature with which librarians undertake the issue of their image. This obsession with image is detrimental to librarians, perception of their professional status. Many articles in library journals record instances and complain about the example, from popular media, of the stereotypical image of the librarians as an old spinster with a bun and sensible shoes.

Therefore, this obsession with the physical-image stereotype is partly responsible for the professional anxiety that plagues librarianship. Roma Harris reveals that librarians' self consciousness with their image is counterproductive, especially when it leads to self depreciation of their profession. It seems that physical image issues are the root of professional insecurity and they need to be eliminated for librarians to improve their perception of their professional status. In relation to a fellow librarians experience with image stereotypes, Angelynn King comments that having internalized (other people's stereotypes) himself, he is making (the stereotypes) worse. Obsession with image and internalization of negative stereotypical images has caused librarians to doubt the worthiness of the profession as a whole.⁴

Poor performance of librarians is one of the causes that bring a bad image of the librarianship profession. When a library science student reads such this material, he might believe that librarians have a bad professional image both

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³ Deirdre Dupre, *The Perception of Image and Status in the Library Profession*, <http://www.newbreed Ubrar anorg/a hives/01.04.aUg200l/feat 2.html>: 15-12-2005.

⁴ *Ibid.*

inside and outside the profession. The student then graduates from the library science school and begins to work in the field as a librarian bringing his poor professional image with him and sharing it with his colleagues. His colleagues also share their professional anxiety with him, thereby reinforcing everyone's insecurities. This sharing has happened for a long time and it, then, spreads out to librarians and other professions as well. As a result, the negative image of librarianship profession in society could be reduced.⁵

C. New Developments of the librarianship

1. Core Areas of Professional Expertise

These core areas are classified into three categories, namely information, information technology and users. The knowledge of these categories uniquely identifies the domain of librarianship and distinguishes it from other professions. Librarians should understand their profession's roles in relation to the larger social context information, information technology and user interact.

a. Information

Knowledge of information resources and organization has historically been the central expertise for librarians. While other disciplines or professions concern with the information content of their areas of expertise, only librarianship has been concerned with management of the full range of recorded knowledge-frequently quite independent of the particular content or context of that record. We know about information acquisition (collection development and management), organization (cataloging, indexing, database design), storage (physical management of the resources), and retrieval. We know how to access to information.

b. Information Technology

Information technology provides tools which librarians perform their

⁵ *Ibid.*

work with. Librarians must understand the technology to use them effectively. Technology is not an end in itself, but a tool to evaluate information management and usage.⁶ In order to employ the information technologies, librarians must be trained in relation to the technologies. Library schools must reconstruct the curriculum of the information technology and how to apply all those technologies in the field of library science.

In the early days, computer programming was taught. With the shift in types of programs used, this is not currently needed. However, the high degree of automation within libraries has led education programs to increase automation components in the curriculum in all areas including cataloging, circulation, inter-library loan, and acquisition. Again, technological developments have led to be changing roles of library professions in the workplace and encouraging the addition of skills such as web page creation.⁷ It is a huge expectation that the above arguments can be reached and response with the technologies must be connected with the curriculum design. For the writer, if there is good will for all components, we can use the technology well, particularly email, Internet access, video-conference and faxing, which are both a challenge and a savior for many associations. Our new members especially expect that information will be forwarded to them electronically and updated regularly.⁸

c. Users Interact

Librarians are concerned about the users of information. They should understand users' needs, patterns of information use, and the matching of users' needs to the contents of the information store. Many of the values of librarianship such as intellectual freedom come from a concern for users and their access to

⁶ Kevin Starr, *The Future of Librarianship*. <http://www.cla-net.org/pubs/future.html> 15-12.2005.

⁷ Davidson-Arnott, Prances and Deborah Kay. "Libraxy Technician Program: Skills-Oriented Paraprofessional Education", *Library Trends*, Winter - 1998, p. 551.

⁸ Kevin Stan, *The Future of Librarianship*, <http://www.cla-net.org/pubs/future.html>: 15-12-2005.

information.⁹ Besides, librarians must have positive response to increasing demands and limited resources, which is for librarians to strengthen cooperation and establish resource sharing networking systems. Therefore, it is a good action that a government must work closely with libraries to initiate automated resource sharing networks which would provide libraries with an expanded access to information and materials not available locally.

Furthermore, seekers of information or users of libraries are becoming an essential element in the information world. So, the inputs of them must be an important argument in the development of libraries collection. It is also known as a community analysis. The analysis is done by librarians and managers of libraries or information centers. By doing this task, cooperation between librarians and managers is a fundamental aspect of how to success the library services. The other important aspect is the involvement of users in submitting any kind of materials they need.

2. Dimensions of Practice

The above three core areas of professional expertise cut across four dimensions of practice and inform how the profession developed in the past and will evolve in the future. Like the core areas of expertise, these dimensions are relatively immutable and serve to define the scope of the niche of librarianship. These dimensions provide a framework for a more precise definition of information work. The following explanation is to study those dimensions in detail.

a. Tool Making

As a profession, we create tools and service models to solve society's information problems. As the emerging information environment grows more complex and competitive, and as computing and telecommunications make an

⁹ *Ibid.*

increasing variety of tools possible, this tool making function will become ever more critical. The changes in how information is created, distributed, and used in the emerging arena of distributed digital information and the library without walls requires new tools to help people store, find and retrieve information in these new forms and contexts.

It is important to know that these developments will require not only the traditional principles and bodies of knowledge of librarianship but also an understanding (1) how these principles and knowledge can be applied to new context and (2) new interdisciplinary knowledge incorporating, for instance, knowledge from cognitive science, computer science, linguistics, communications, and educational psychology.

b. Information Management

This dimension relates directly to the application of the tools of the profession to the management of information from its acquisition to its dissemination. Librarians have traditionally been the experts on the tools used for information storage, organization and retrieval. We have both used those tools on behalf of users and advised users on their use. When increasingly abundant digital media accelerate the transition of library as place to library as logical entity, many traditional functions, such as collection development, will be performed in dramatically new ways using equally dramatic new tools. One fact is clear, in this emerging environment of geographically distributed digital information, the function of information management will become increasingly critical to the processes of information access, filtering, analysis and use.

c. Service

Librarians have traditionally provided users with two kinds of direct services, namely, help in using the tools to find information and training in the use of the tools. In helping users find information they need, we have generally provided an array of sources in terms of specific needs and the choice of an authoritative answer. In other words, we often direct the user toward sources of

information without evaluating those sources in the light of the specific needs.

Therefore, we need a certain approach in order to handle the potential problems that can become a huge barrier in the development of library services. This approach is called “consultative or partnership model” by which the librarian as agent or partner in the information enterprise by way of information analysis, synthesis and the presentation of an information product serves as the information expert in an information problem-solving team with consumer. The trend toward the consultative model will increase as information structures grow in both complexity, such as multi- and hypermedia and abundance. The services provided by professional librarians will range along a continuum from a traditional resource provision model, in which the librarian provides that user with resources that potentially contain the answer, to a consultative model in which the information professional directly solves the information need of the user or actively collaborates with the user in reaching that solution.¹⁰

d. Management of Information Organization

As we know that the issues of management are not unique to librarianship world. Throughout our society all sorts of organizations - government, educational, and business - are being challenged by economic pressures to modernize, downsize, and generally make management practices more streamlined and sophisticated. Public organizations must now attract financial support through grants and gifts in a major way; public funding is no longer enough.

These pressures toward efficiency, effectiveness, and accountability will require that librarians have expertise in new processes of management and organizational behavior. While not unique to librarianship, the need for this expertise is critical, because without sufficient resources and effective use of available resources, libraries and other information organizations or units will be

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

unable to deliver the services needed by society and will ultimately lose their legitimacy as solver of society's information problems.¹¹

3. Creativity in the Librarianship World

In order to improve the image of society towards librarians, it is very important for them to be creative in their field, for example, the librarians must be writers, teachers, etc. I am convinced that these jobs will be significantly influencing in the existence of librarianship profession. Since leaders in librarianship are often also the authors of the literature in our field, and because prolific authors are granted leadership status in a field that values the written word, the librarians who write for professional journals and publish books have a tremendous amount of influence on the profession. As a librarian is allowed to publish an article in a professional it is implied that the views expressed in the article are somehow valid simply by their being published. In a juried publication, the accepted articles carry the stamp of having been accepted by well-respected leaders in the field, giving the articles and the authors even more clout.

Since authors of professional literature in library science are almost automatically given leadership status in the field, the question of authority arises. Authority is often mistakenly attributed to those in power simply because power and authority often go together. It seems that it is time we got over our public image and started concentrating on the portrayal of the services that libraries provide both power and authority which are granted to authors in the library profession due to the simple fact that they are published, giving them opportunity to contribute to the continuing professional worries through their writings.

In addition, professional worries greatly affect traditional management concerns like employee motivation, recruitment of librarians, retention of quality

¹¹ *Ibid.*

staff and salary issues. A librarian suffering from professional worries may feel generally lackluster about his job, resulting in an unmotivated work style. It is difficult for a librarian to muster up enthusiasm for his daily work if he feels that his profession is not a worthy one. Likewise, librarians who feel professionally insecure may be tempted to look for another line of work, or may job hop from library to library in an attempt to find the element supposedly lacking in their chosen career.¹² Furthermore, association is one of the ways to increase the confession of people to the existence of information and knowledge sharing and a way to make contacts with others. Information professionals recognize that they need relevant information to be effective in their position and that practical up-to-date information is readily and openly shared at association conferences and in association publications, list services and websites. Building an association of profession brings several advantages.

a. An Opportunity to Develop Leadership Skills

Librarians in a way to look for upward movement in their career and their profession, library association gives members the opportunity to develop leadership skills through serving as leaders in communities, interest group, divisions and executive councils. Such positions give the professional a chance to enhance his or her leadership, planning and organizational skills and to demonstrate these skills to others.

b. Networking opportunities

There are networking opportunities that allow professionals or job seekers to hear of opportunities for change or promotion and often provide a first point of contact, which can assist in getting the critical interview. For example, particularly those working with associations which conduct and publish research, membership in an association allows them to become familiar with the processes of research and publication by which such research and publication contribute to

¹² Deirdre Dupre, *The Perception of Image and Status in the Library Profession*,

their profession and establish their authority as experts in particular areas.

c. Increasing the Awareness of Librarians

A sense of professional community is developed through associations, as like minded professionals establish codes of ethics and work together and with others on issues of mutual concern, such as intellectual freedom and access to information. Through such activities, members increase their awareness of the roles and responsibilities of the profession.

d. Chance of participation

One of the benefits to be joining an association, particularly for those who actively participate, is that they are likely to be more informed and up to date on current issues. This is an essential reason why employers should support and encourage their staffs to actively participate in associations. An unpublished survey presented at the 1997 ALA midwinter meeting concluded that librarians who participate actively are more marketable, more likely to be promoted, and more likely to succeed in their career.¹³

D. Potential Challenges

It is true that the emergence of a variety of new information professions, the perception of society towards a librarian as a single information provider is no longer valid. The traditional belief among people over the centuries has been saying that a librarian as a single information conservator is also not true now. It seems that the new information professions extremely change the basic concept of information world.¹⁴ Today, our society and librarianship world are challenged by several major trends that are changing the way we work, learn and communicate.

<http://www.newbreedlibrarian.org/archives/01.04.hug2001/featUre2.htXfII> 15-12-2005.

¹³ Vicki Whitmell, The Future of the Library Profession - Presentation for Pacific Northwest Library Association, <http://1209.21790.93/resources/future.html>.

¹⁴ Sulisty-Basuki. "Pustakawan sebagai Profesional Informasi modern: tantangan dan peluang", *Dinamika Informasi dalam Era Global*. Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya. 1998, p. 256.

1. Globalization

Increasingly we live and work in an environment of global interdependence and global competition where personal, educational and corporate success is determined by timely access to global information resources.

2. Information Explosion

During the last few decades, published information has increased at an unprecedented rate, with the total amount of recorded information estimated to be doubling every ten to twenty years. Acquiring, organizing and making this information accessible present a serious and growing challenge.

3. Revolution in Computer Technology

One of the trends is the revolution in computer technology, which has created a New World of electronic access to information. While books and periodicals will continue to serve as the main source of information for education and communication for many generations to come, new electronic information systems are augmenting and, in many instances, replacing traditional printed information sources. This creates tremendous challenges for individuals, which must learn to use them effectively. An even more serious problem is the emerging chasm between information “haves and “have not”. If all people are to meet their full economic and personal potential, they must not only be print literate, but must be information literate as well.

4. Acceleration in the Technological Change

The other trend is acceleration in the rate of technological change which has created an increase need for lifelong learning and retraining. More and more of our young people now are expected to change employment several times in their lives, with new skills required each time. Therefore, we will see that lifelong learning is not only desirable but may mean economic necessity.

Business and workers today are trying to cope with staggering growth in publication, information and human knowledge while learning how to compete in information driven global economy that requires access to global information

resources. For example, the Papua New Guinea economy is and will become dependent on the information resources acquired, organized and maintained by libraries. So, it would be extremely short-sighted to believe that Papua New Guinea will be able to compete in the emerging information-based economy without continuous access to strong libraries and the new electronic resources.¹⁵

Besides, there are several challenges which can become major barriers in the development of librarianship science and its roles in the dissemination of information. Therefore, librarians have to do research in terms of the advancement in the information world. This research will help librarians understand the way to manage and develop the sorts of information services. In responding this situation, Sulistyobasuki reveals several arguments that are relating to the challenges, which are faced by librarians.

a. Increase of New Professions

Historically, professions in the field of information were only found, like librarians, archivists and curators but now there are many new professions such as on-line specialist and information broker, which are more familiar than librarians.

b. Digitalization of Information

The development of information technology is to enable all kinds of information to be stored not only in printed media but also in recorded ones. Certainly, this change needs new skills and knowledge for librarians in order to serve users professionally. Without the skills and knowledge, librarians can not deliver and disseminate the information-digitized to seekers of information efficiently and effectively.

c. Lack of Self-Confidence of Librarians

In the context of Indonesian librarianship profession, it seems that

¹⁵ Polycarp Reu. *Selling the Information Profession in Papua New Guinea*. hUp://www.pngbuai.com/60technology/informat~on/waigam/1ibrarsanshsp/WS97-sec22-polycarp.htm]\$hzncion.

librarians have a lack of self-confidence in terms of their field. For example, almost all congresses that have been conducted by Indonesian Librarian Association have invited non-librarian expert presenters. This indicates that Indonesian librarians are still shy of their knowledge in relation to the information world.

d. Inability of Librarians

The weakness of librarianship world is that the librarians are unable to improve their position among other professions. For instance, library is still the lowest subordinate institution, in which all its administrative systems are handled by non-librarianship officers. Of course, these officers do not understand what exactly librarians need and how to develop this profession.

e. Shift in Paradigm

Over the centuries, librarianship paradigm has been in the acquisition and storage. Therefore, most librarians have only been busy in processing or cataloging all collections they have found regardless with the users' needs. However, the new paradigm emphasizes that the librarians should have a concept, which is oriented in the needs of users or seekers of information. This concept is called "user-oriented".

E. Opportunities in the Information World

Generally, the realm of librarianship has a bunch of chances that offer a solution in coping with the information. People who have an access to information designate that they will have a good future. For example, those people must be aware that information is very important to their promotion or to find out and to single out what kind of jobs they want. It is clear that the global information enforces people in all level of society to be involved, because avoiding the information is that means "someone is ready to be left by his or her colleagues". So, there are several opportunities amongst librarians that are crucial to be understood so that they can be survived in the flow of the global

information.

1. The Use of Technology

The information technology is a tool that can improve the performance of librarians in the way they serve users and seekers of information. Therefore, this technology must be exploited on behalf of satisfaction of the users. Using the technology in good manner, particularly e-mail, internet access, video conference and faxing is both a challenge and opportunity in handling and working in the information world. This technology enables librarians to make cooperation and networking with other librarians and their users as well. In addition, the information can be forwarded to users electronically and updated regularly.¹⁶

The writer is convinced that the application of the information technology in the libraries will make librarianship activities become more familiar and people will admit that librarians in the flow of information are very important. Furthermore, the librarians' association, which harnesses a networking technology, will be beneficial for librarians in running their librarianship tasks. Nevertheless, the cost of implementing new technology delivery channels is also expensive. Therefore, the important thing is that we have to attest to both the actual cost to be allocated and the advantages to be achieved by librarians and users. From this assessment, librarians and managers of libraries should determine whether or not they use the technology channels.

2. Helping People to know

The librarians' role of "helping people to know" is based on the principles of entitlement to know anything, which requires both education and information system. This role immediately assumes that libraries have products and services to sell and all of which have to be measured to determine their relevance and success in an ever changing environment. Because of the nature of our work, we immediately assume that our main business is to look at

¹⁶ Vicki Whitmell. *The Future of the Library Profession - Presentation for Pacific Northwest*

information as a product to serve to the library clientele. But the other side of the coin is acknowledging the fact that we as librarians have our skills, knowledge and experience to sell. This very important aspect of selling is often overlooked. But it requires us to go out and tell people to know by developing their information handling skills-their abilities to analyze daily problems, seek relevant information, gain access to it efficiently and effectively, use it productively and devise solutions to help improve the quality of their working or personal lives.¹⁷

3. Collaboration

Collaboration is one of the ways to be existed in the information profession. One of the capabilities of information professionals is coping with the collaboration. Besides, they also understand who allies of librarians are. In the information world, neither one nor the others are able to manage all kinds of information and also neither one nor the others know everything. Therefore, all of them have to conduct collaboration so that they can perform a good action in terms of librarianship services. As a result, people can appreciate the performance of librarianship activities and librarians as well.

4. Librarian as a Sponsor of Change

In explaining the changes, the writer tends to employ Sulistyo-Basuki's explanation, which reveals that the issues are classified into four changes. The first one is the change in relation to one's commitment for the success of other people. It is also relating with the management of technology, collection, information access and human resources. All of these are destined for the people who are involved in the information world, including users and staffs.

The second change is decentralization versus centralization. The institutions having libraries must rethink the management systems they used in running their

Library Association, <http://209.217.90.93/resources/future.html>.

¹⁷ Polycarp Reu, *Selling...*, <http://www.pngbuai.com/6ootechnology/information/waigani/librarianship/WS97-sec22-polycarp.html#function>.

libraries. They should do a research or survey in order to determine what kind of systems is appropriate for their libraries, either decentralization or centralization.

The third change is the rapid development of knowledge. Librarians must follow changes of any knowledge for the sake of users. In doing so, they have to be good readers to know what their users need. Besides, the advancement in the information technology is a huge phenomenon, which would enforce librarians to be good learners. Finally, the role of librarians is the other change in the information world. Librarian is becoming more as a mediator of information than as provider of information. In addition to this, the media of information tend to change from printed media to electronic media.¹⁸

F. Conclusion

This article tries to find out several issues that might make librarians worried about their profession. The facts of librarianship activities, particularly those are being encountered and experienced by librarians, are the focus on this article. One of the potential problems is professionalism of librarians in answering and handling the demand of users. Coping with information technology is also a problem that must be aware of, not only by librarians but also the managers of librarianship programs.

Being a professional librarian is not only walking around the room to find something to read, but knowing what resources are available and how to handle information from those various sources. In other words, librarians should know how to digest, to evaluate, and to learn from the sources. The reality of modern information technology has already created a future image, which threatens libraries as well as librarians. The last important point is, therefore, that the librarians should be aware of the statement saying “the future is belonging to those who are willing to move along with changes and employing the

¹⁸ Sulisty-Basuki. “Pustakawan...”, p. 260-262.

technological changes to assist their profession”.

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