
Optimizing the development and utilization of libraries through collaboration

Anandita Fitriani Pratama¹; Asep Saeful Rohman¹, Hasnah Hashim²

¹Library and Information Science, Faculty of Communication, Universitas Padjadjaran, Indonesia

²College of Computers, Informatics & Mathematics, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia

Paper Type:

Research Paper

Abstract

Background of the study: Collaboration in the library sector is essential to fulfill the library users' information needs.

Purpose: The objective of this study is to investigate the methods, types of collaboration, and challenges involved in the implementation of cooperative efforts between the West Java Dispusipda and UNIKOM Library, to enhance the development and utilization of the library.

Method: In this research, a qualitative approach is employed to analyze the data, which is subsequently processed through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions.

Findings: The collaboration between the West Java Dispusipda and UNIKOM Library is based on a policy that outlines the roles, responsibilities, and scope of the cooperation. The agreed activity plan includes various initiatives such as enhancing the quality of human resources, exchanging experts, conducting research cooperation, implementing science and technology applications, and collaborating in other areas. However, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, not all planned activities have been fully implemented. One notable achievement is the accreditation of the UNIKOM Library.

Conclusion: Cooperation is an effort to achieve library goals

Keywords: *library collaboration, information institutions, library utilization*

Submitted: 17 October 2023

Revised: 5 November 2023

Accepted: 27 November 2023

Online: 18 December 2023

*Correspondence:
Asep Saeful Rohman

E-mail:
asep.saeful@unpad.ac.id

Introduction

Information is an entity that has a vital role in building human civilization. The presence of libraries as information institutions that act as bridges for information and knowledge certainly plays an important function in society. The resources and services offered by libraries all seek to transfer information and form new ideas to build a creative and innovative information society. Without the existence of libraries, it would be difficult for us to advance research and human insight, as well as safeguard world heritage to be passed on to future generations.

[Law no. 43 of 2007](#) Articles 3 & 4 concerning Libraries explains that: "The library functions as a vehicle for education, research, information preservation, and recreation to increase the intelligence and empowerment of the nation. Libraries aim to provide services to users, increase their love of reading, and broaden their horizons and knowledge to make the nation's life more intelligent."

Library management cannot be separated from the need for cooperation with various parties to meet the information needs of users. Collaboration for libraries is important because no library can fully equip itself in terms of information no matter how big and large the collection it has. Collaboration is a necessity for libraries, especially small-scale libraries. Based on [Law no. 43 of 2007](#) concerning Libraries Chapter XI Article 42 concerning Library Cooperation states that libraries can partner with any party to optimize services to users. Optimizing services in this context is to increase the number of visitors visiting and maximize the quality of library services.

As an institution operating in the information sector, service is the spearhead that determines the success of a library. Services can be said to be the 'face' of the library. Service is the first thing that becomes a determining factor in the image and perception of users of the library. [Choshaly & Mirabolghasemi \(2019\)](#), stated that information control, the role of the library as a place, and the impact of services are key factors that influence user perceptions of library services, therefore whether a library is good or not depends on the implementation of these services. The quality of the services provided plays a role in shaping the image of users from the perspective of librarians ([Idowu & Oso, 2022](#)). Therefore, libraries must ensure that each of their services runs well and can meet the information needs of users. Library collaboration offers various benefits for the parties involved. Yusniah et al (2022) see library collaboration as an activity that can expand accessibility to library collections, improve the quality of service to users, increase the involvement of various resources, enable the exchange of catalog data, library materials, and purchase of library materials to improve services to customers. user. Keeping lines of communication open and encouraging ongoing collaborative work is critical to maintaining library partnerships ([Farrell, 2015](#)). In carrying out collaboration, according to [Prasetya \(2021\)](#), several important factors need to be paid attention to by each party involved so that the collaboration can run well.

Library collaboration includes many benefits that can be obtained, including cost savings, better collections, implementation of new programs, and staff development, while the risks include incompatibilities and diverse organizational cultures ([Ullah, 2015](#)). Library collaboration and cooperation can have an impact on cultural change in libraries ([Majidah & Kom, 2019](#)). Through synergy and exchange of ideas, libraries can improve their ability to provide services with a variety of physical and intellectual resources to expand access to information and knowledge, as well as utilize libraries to encourage the adoption of practices and innovation. This can form a library culture that is more dynamic, inclusive, and responsive to the needs of modern society. Studies regarding the perceptions and needs of library users can provide direction for library programs and services based on research results, and it has been found that library services can be changed according to user characteristics ([Noh, et al 2019](#)).



Cooperation between libraries and information institutions includes various forms of collaboration. All library resources are involved in this collaboration so that services are not limited to inter-library loans ([Winoto & Sinaga, 2018](#)). Library collaboration is a crucial thing that needs to be paid attention to by libraries and other institutions. Collaboration enables libraries to offer more optimal services to users, creating dynamic spaces that encourage exploration and collaboration, and fulfilling the library's function of preserving information in the modern era. Library collaboration ranging from simple or informal approaches to more formal approaches has been highlighted as necessary, desirable, and unavoidable, and a key initiative and strategic management to address change and challenges. Library collaboration is an important strategy in responding to the challenges faced by modern libraries in the current era.

One of the collaborations within the library scope is the collaboration carried out by the West Java Library and Archives Service with the Indonesian Computer University Library to improve the development and utilization of libraries. Indonesian Computer University (UNIKOM) is a university located in Bandung City, West Java. Indonesian Computer University is known as a university that focuses on the fields of technology, computers, and information science. In the digital era, cooperation between libraries and information institutions allows expanding access to information and improving the quality of services to users. This is very much in line with advances in information technology which enable more effective collaboration with wider resources. The merger of the two disciplines from the West Java Dispusipda and the Indonesian Computer University is expected to open up opportunities for innovation and create libraries that are more adaptive, efficient, and relevant in the digital era, as well as support the increase in human resources (HR) who are more competent in managing and accessing information. Therefore, it is important to examine this collaboration more deeply to understand the benefits that can be obtained now and in the future. This research focuses on the strategies and forms of collaboration implemented by the West Java Dispusipda and the UNIKOM Library in improving library development and utilization.

In compiling this research, researchers referred to several previous studies as references. [Putri \(2019\)](#) revealed that the strategies carried out by the library in their collaboration are policy, increasing human resource competency, correlation, resource sharing, and information technology. In implementing these various collaborations, there are supporting aspects, including increased demand from users, technological developments, and sustainable use. Apart from that, some aspects hinder the progress of cooperation, including geographical distance, limited corner space, and time. Next study from [Stiawan and Kurniawan \(2019\)](#) the findings in this research state that implementing this collaboration with the Indian embassy requires a fairly long process and takes around four years. There are several forms of collaboration in this India Corner service, namely providing books about India and understanding Indian culture.

Method

Research Design

This research utilizes a descriptive-analytical study approach with qualitative methods. This approach allows researchers to explore a deeper understanding of the phenomenon being studied, as well as provide a comprehensive description of the research topic. [Creswell \(2016\)](#) stated that qualitative research is a research method for investigating and understanding meanings that are considered rooted in social or humanitarian problems by several individuals or groups of people. Another opinion was expressed by [Moleong \(2012\)](#) who explained that qualitative research is: *"research that intends to understand phenomena experienced by research subjects, for example, behavior, perceptions, motivations, actions, etc. holistically and using descriptions in the form of words and language, in a special natural context and by*



utilizing various natural methods".

The characteristics of qualitative research explained by [Sugiyono \(2019\)](#) are as follows: "1) *Carried out in natural conditions, directly to the data source and the researcher is the key instrument;* 2) *Qualitative research is more descriptive. The data collected is in the form of words or images, so there is no emphasis on numbers;* 3) *Qualitative research tends to focus more on processes rather than products or outcomes;* 4) *Qualitative research carries out inductive data analysis;* 5) *Qualitative research emphasizes meaning."* Qualitative research aims to describe the empirical facts of the phenomenon being investigated in depth. Researchers use qualitative research methods because they are considered effective for gathering the information needed from informants directly, as well as producing more detailed data.

Location

The research was conducted at the West Java Dispusipda which is located on Jl. Kawalayaan Indah II No. 4, Jatisari, District. Stone fruit. Bandung City, West Java. The research was conducted from September 2023 to October 2023. In compiling this research, data was collected through a process of direct interviews with informants, observation, and literature study. Two types of data were used in this research, namely primary data sourced from informants, and secondary data taken from previous research.

Data Collection

Researchers select research subjects or informants to be interviewed using purposive sampling techniques by selecting informants who match the research criteria or requirements. [Sugiyono \(2018\)](#) stated that the purposive sampling technique is a sampling technique with certain considerations. In this case, researchers need to consider several relevant specific criteria to ensure that the informants selected can provide in-depth information and understanding. The criteria that have been determined for informants in this research are: 1) the informant is a librarian/staff from the West Java Dispusipda who is directly responsible for collaborative activities with the Indonesian Computer University Library; 2) the informant is a librarian/staff from the West Java Dispusipda who understands matters related to collaboration with the Indonesian Computer University Library.

Data Analysis

The data analysis process consists of three stages, namely data reduction, data presentation, and concluding. This data reduction stage involves the process of grouping data, sorting, and selecting key variables that will be used in further analysis. This process allows researchers to identify findings that can contain a lot of information. In the process, relevant data will be selected while irrelevant or noisy data is removed. At the data presentation stage, the researcher compiles the information that has been obtained. Presentation of this data can use various forms, such as notes, to the use of technical visuals such as graphs, tables, and diagrams to communicate findings clearly and effectively. After the data is presented, the researcher will analyze the data results to achieve a deeper understanding of the research questions. The researcher will connect the data to relevant theories or frameworks, look for significant patterns or correlations, and identify something that can be concluded from the findings. The conclusions drawn become the basis for formulating answers to research questions and directing the necessary actions or policies. The conclusion-drawing stage is important in producing a meaningful and relevant understanding of research data.



Result and Discussion

College libraries are often considered the center or heart of a university because they have a vital function in achieving the goals of higher education as its parent institution, by providing services to the academic community and the surrounding community, as well as supporting the implementation of the Tri Dharma of Higher Education, which includes educational activities, research, and community service. In this context, cooperation with other information institutions becomes essential. Collaboration between university libraries and information institutions is a strategic step that plays a key role in enriching information access and improving service quality.

UNIKOM Library is a center of information and knowledge for the academic community. This makes cooperation a necessity to fulfill the need for information and services optimally in supporting academic activities, research, and intellectual development. Many institutions and libraries at both national and international levels have collaborated with the UNIKOM Library. One of the partner institutions is the West Java Dispusipda. Dispusipda West Java is a government institution in West Java Province that is responsible for managing libraries and archives in the region. The role of the West Java Dispusipda is very important in supporting the development of literacy, education, and preserving cultural heritage at the provincial level. One form of implementing this support is through cooperation and collaboration. Dispusipda West Java is open to collaboration with libraries and information institutions, as well as national and international institutions in various initiatives and projects that support library and archive management.

The West Java Dispusipda and the Indonesian Computer University Library (UNIKOM) collaboration was signed on April 13, 2021. This signing was represented by each party, namely the Head of the West Java Dispusipda who was serving at that time, and the Deputy Chancellor II of the Indonesian Computer University. The aim and objective of implementing this collaboration is that the collaboration be carried out in the context of developing and empowering libraries in the field of technology, which aims to realize development in the fields of libraries, librarianship, reading culture, and archives in West Java Province. The use of technology in libraries can drive development and empowerment in various aspects of libraries, librarianship, reading culture, and archives so that users can access and use information better and more effectively. The object of this collaboration is the development and utilization of libraries.

West Java Dispusipda and UNIKOM Library Collaboration Strategy

A cooperative strategy refers to a planning effort or approach used by various parties or institutions to work together to achieve a common goal or find a solution to a problem. Collaboration strategies can take the form of cooperation methods and actions taken to achieve predetermined targets. In the political dictionary, [Marbun \(2007\)](#) explains that policy is a set of concepts and basics that regulate plans for implementing a task, leadership in government, or an organization, a statement of ideals, targets, principles, or intentions that serve as a guide in achieving goals. The strategic aspect of library cooperation involves preparing cooperation plans, such as policy development, increasing human resources, correlation, resource sharing, and the application of technology to improve library services and meet library needs ([Hutapepa, et al., 2023](#)). West Java Dispusipda Library and UNIKOM Library created a policy in their collaboration. This policy is important in determining the duties and responsibilities of the parties involved, as well as the scope of ongoing cooperation. The planning stage for cooperation with the West Java Dispusipda begins with submitting a cooperation request by the UNIKOM Library, after the application is received a cooperation draft will be made, then both parties will discuss matters related to the cooperation that will be carried out such as the form



of cooperation, scope, and the time for implementing the collaboration. In the next step, the West Java Dispusipda will write a letter requesting facilitation which will be submitted to the West Java Provincial Government and Regional Autonomy Bureau, cooperation section. After the application is approved, a cooperation agreement or MoA (Memorandum of Agreement) is signed by both parties and the cooperation can be implemented.

Form of Collaboration between Dispusipda West Java and UNIKOM Library

The collaboration between the West Java Dispusipda and the UNIKOM Library lasts for two years from the time the cooperation agreement is signed and can be extended according to the agreement while still taking into account the rules stipulated in the applicable laws and regulations. Collaboration between libraries and information institutions has a broad scope and involves various aspects. The scope of this collaboration involves various elements that depend greatly on the goals, policies, and resources of each institution. The scope of collaboration between West Java Dispusipda and UNIKOM Library includes: 1) Increasing HR competency by pursuing formal education, non-formal education, and practical experience in the field or internships; 2) exchange of experts in the scope of libraries, librarianship, and archives; 3) implementation of research collaboration in the fields of libraries, librarianship, reading culture, literacy and archives; 4) Application of science and technology to empower the community through library users and access to information with a social inclusion approach; and 5) cooperation in other programs approved by all relevant parties by statutory provisions.

Increasing human resource competency by pursuing formal education, non-formal education, and practical experience in the field or internships is one effort to form individuals who are competent, have character, and are ready to compete. In this context, the West Java Dispusipda and the UNIKOM Library can collaborate in providing provisions in the form of training and counseling for the UNIKOM academic community and the West Java Dispusipda library staff. to sharpen insight and practical skills that are relevant to today's needs. Competency improvement is also carried out through internship activities for students to apply knowledge and skills in a real way.

The exchange of experts in the fields of libraries, librarianship, and archives is a form of collaboration that allows experts to share knowledge, experience, and practice. This contributes to the development of institutions from each party as well as strengthening cooperation networks between institutions which will have an impact on improving the quality of services to the community. Within the scope of implementing research collaboration in the fields of libraries, librarianship, reading culture, literacy, and archives, the West Java Dispusipda and UNIKOM Libraries can encourage research collaboration involving experts in the fields of libraries and technology. This multidisciplinary approach can produce a more comprehensive understanding and research that helps develop access to information, a reading culture, and broader literacy in society.

The application of science and technology to empower the community through library users and access to information with a social inclusion approach is a step that will open up great opportunities for the development of knowledge for society more evenly. Libraries have been proven to be stable and adaptable infrastructures and able to respond to social changes in society ([Hernández-Pérez et al, 2022](#)). Through technology integration, libraries can provide access to digital resources and services that enable all levels of society to participate in them. One form of implementing this scope is requiring all UNIKOM academics to register as members of the West Java Dispusipda. This is done so that UNIKOM academics can access and utilize West Java Dispusipda's collection of library materials and services both online and offline. For collaboration in other fields, West Java Dispusipda and UNIKOM carry out accreditation activities to measure and assess various aspects of libraries such as infrastructure, collections,



workforce, and services provided. The UNIKOM library is accredited A which shows conformity to national library standards.

Barriers to Collaboration

Collaboration between libraries occurs naturally, but that does not mean that all library collaboration has the same level of effectiveness, efficiency, and direction ([Dempsey, 2019](#)). Factors such as differences in agendas and priorities, partnership structures, constitutions, and processes, as well as external obstacles, can hinder the collaboration process ([Azizpour & Fathizadeh, 2016](#)). Collaboration between libraries and information institutions is often without several obstacles. The collaboration between the West Java Dispusipda and the UNIKOM Library is one of the activities affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Activity restrictions imposed during the pandemic mean that libraries cannot carry out their duties and functions fully. Therefore, the planned activities could not be implemented. Based on the results of an interview with one of the librarians at the West Java Dispusipda, of all planned activities, so far only accreditation activities have been realized.

Conclusion

Libraries as information institutions play a role in bridging information and knowledge in society. The resources and services provided by libraries aim to transfer information aimed at building a creative and innovative society. Therefore, libraries must pay attention to optimal services to meet library information needs. Collaboration between libraries and information institutions is a strategic step that enables increased access to information and quality of service. The scope of cooperation between Dispusipda West Java and UNIKOM Library includes: 1) Increasing human resource competency by pursuing formal education, non-formal education, and practical experience in the field or internships; 2) exchange of experts in the fields of libraries, librarianship and archives; 3) implementation of research collaboration in the fields of libraries, librarianship, reading culture, literacy and archives; 4) application of science and technology in community empowerment through the use of libraries and access to information based on social inclusion; and 5) cooperation in other agreed programs. However, the Covid-19 pandemic has affected the implementation of cooperation plans. Restrictions on activities during the pandemic have affected the library's ability to carry out collaboration plans optimally. Of all planned activities, UNIKOM library accreditation has been realized with an A grade.

Acknowledgments

We would like to acknowledge and thank all those who have given valuable contributions to this study

Authors' Contributions

All authors have contributed to the final manuscript. The contribution of all authors: Anandita Fitriani Pratama and Asep Saeful Rohman: conceptualization, methodology, formal analysis, writing original draft preparation, writing review and editing. Hasnah Hasyim: writing review and editing. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

Conflict of Interest

All authors have no conflict of interest related to this study.

Funding

This study did not receive any funding.



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