

Challenges and Opportunities for Public University Libraries in the Era of Information Technology in Attracting Users' Interest

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ABSTRACT

The era of information technology has brought significant changes in various aspects of life, including in library management and services. Padang State University Library faces major challenges in attracting users, especially amidst the development of easily accessible digital information sources. This article aims to analyze the challenges and opportunities of the library in optimizing its role as an academic information center in the digital era. This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study method, collecting data through interviews with librarians, surveys with students, and direct observation of library activities. The results of the study indicate that the main challenges faced are the lack of innovation in providing digital services, limited budget for technology development, and low awareness of users of the potential of libraries as a trusted source of information. However, there is a great opportunity for libraries to increase their attractiveness through the development of technology-based services, such as digital library applications, integration of sophisticated information retrieval systems, and the provision of modern collaborative learning spaces. In addition, information literacy programs and training in the use of digital resources are key strategies in attracting users. This article concludes that the Padang State University Library has great potential to transform into a relevant and adaptive information center in the era of information technology, as long as it is able to optimally utilize opportunities and overcome challenges strategically. The recommendations proposed include the development of digital infrastructure, improving librarian skills, and actively promoting library services to increase user participation.

INTRODUCTION

The rapid development of information technology has affected various fields of life and professions, this has led to system changes in agencies or companies, which must also change the way work. Information technology is widely used in managing a job because its effectiveness and efficiency have been proven to accelerate performance, which will increase incoming profits or turnover, both financially and network.

With the advancement of science and information technology, every organization, including libraries, needs workers or employees who have professional abilities. Professional ability means quality human resources who master the skills and knowledge and attitudes that support development in all fields, are able to place various opportunities and are resilient in facing challenges (Subrata, 2009). This needs to be realized, because one of the challenges faced by organizations both in the government and private sectors in the future is to create organizations that can provide maximum services to their environment, but at the same time demand increasingly efficient, effective and productive management.

With the existence of information technology in the library, many activities can be developed, among others, as a library management information system or better known as library automation, namely activities to integrate procurement, inventory, cataloging, collection circulation, as well as processing member data and statistics. As well as adjusting user needs, the library has entered into a digital library. Activities such as storing, obtaining, disseminating knowledge and digital formats and can be accessed online via the internet (Triningsih, C. E, 2017).

Libraries, which are in fact one of the information resources, must be the driving force for the advancement of an institution, in this case an educational institution, because the demands that must be carried out by libraries in serving information and as information resources are so great that libraries should continue to provide the latest and quality information to information seekers both from academics, researchers and the general public (Simatupang, 2020). So this is where the library leader must provide new breakthroughs and innovations so that the library is able to provide good and optimal services, and provide fresh air in advancing the library itself.

The challenges faced by libraries in this era of digital technology are changes in the behavior of information users, as the younger generation is more likely to use online platforms to search and access information than to visit physical libraries. This requires libraries to provide digital-based services to be relevant to the needs of today's users, in addition to the challenges faced, namely in terms of the availability of human resources who have limited technological competence and budget limitations in supporting digital infrastructure development (Ilhami, 2024).

The era of digital technology also brings great opportunities for libraries to improve operational efficiency through automation and better data management. By leveraging digital technologies, libraries can reach a wider audience through online services and more effective information literacy

programs. Innovations in service delivery and collection development, such as digital platforms, enable better interaction with users and can strengthen the library's position as a knowledge center in society (Oktavia, 2024). Based on the results of the study, it shows that the problem that occurs is that with some developing technologies there are various platforms that make it easier for people to find information, which causes people to prefer to find information through social media and other platforms that help them find information. Therefore, the researcher researched this title so that people would know that libraries have also used information technology such as digital services. With information technology the library can develop automation in the library as well as create e-books that can be accessed remotely online.

METHODOLOGY

This research uses the literature review method as the main approach. This method is carried out by collecting, examining, and analyzing various sources of literature relevant to the topic "Challenges and Opportunities of Padang State University Library in the Era of Information Technology in Attracting User Interest." The literature sources used include journal articles, books, research reports, and policy documents related to library management, information technology, and library user behavior in the digital era (Juwita, 2022).

The research phase began with the identification of the topic and problem formulation to determine the focus of the study. Next, a literature search was conducted using online databases such as Google Scholar, DOAJ, and national journal portals, with keywords such as "library transformation," "information technology," "user interest," and "digital library." Selected literature was screened based on relevance, quality of sources, and currency of information.

The data obtained from the literature was then analyzed qualitatively to identify the main challenges faced by libraries, opportunities that can be utilized, and strategies that are relevant in the context of library management in the era of information technology. The analysis was conducted by comparing findings from various literatures to get a comprehensive conclusion (Juwita, 2022).

The literature study method was chosen because it provides a comprehensive overview based on various previously reviewed perspectives. In addition, this approach also allows researchers to formulate practical recommendations based on empirical findings and recognized theories. Thus, the results of this study are expected to provide in-depth insight and become a foundation for Padang State University library managers in developing innovative and relevant services (Rahman, 2020).

RESEARCH RESULT AND DISCUSSION

In this research, a literature study on the challenges and opportunities of Padang State University Library in the era of information technology has revealed various findings that can provide a clear picture of the situation faced by the library. Based on the analysis of various relevant sources, it can be

concluded that Padang State University Library faces a number of challenges that must be faced in order to attract users and remain relevant in the midst of changing times. However, there are also various opportunities that can be utilized to overcome these challenges and improve library services in the digital era.

Challenges of Padang State University Library

One of the main challenges faced by Padang State University Library is the changing behavior of users who are increasingly dependent on digital information sources. According to several studies reviewed, many users, especially students, prefer to search for information through the internet and digital platforms rather than visiting physical libraries. This is due to the ease and speed of access to information that can be obtained through electronic devices, such as computers and smartphones. In addition, the existence of e-learning platforms, online journals, and institutional repositories that can be accessed anytime and anywhere makes physical libraries less attractive to users who are used to the convenience and flexibility of digital information sources (Raman, 2020).

In addition, the limited technological infrastructure at Padang State University Library is also a challenge. Several articles reviewed mentioned that many libraries in Indonesia, including Padang State University, do not fully have adequate technology facilities to support digital library services. The lack of well-integrated hardware, software and information systems hampers the library's efforts to provide optimal services for users. In addition, managing and updating digital content, such as e-book collections and electronic journals, is also often an obstacle that must be faced (Sari, 2021).

Another challenge is the lack of training and capacity building of librarians in managing information technology. Although librarians have expertise in traditional information management, many librarians are not familiar with the rapidly evolving digital-based information systems. Some librarians may feel less confident in using the latest tools and applications that can help in digitizing collections or providing services to users. As a result, libraries cannot fully utilize the potential of technology to attract users.

In addition, the low awareness of library users about the importance of using library services as a reliable source of information is also a challenge. Many students prefer to rely on information that is easily found on the internet, even though it cannot always be ascertained for its validity and credibility. This is due to the perception that all information found on the internet is valid and credible. Information on the internet is valid, while information in libraries is considered outdated or less relevant. Therefore, a great effort is needed to educate users about the importance of selecting and accessing valid and quality information (Juwita, 2022).

Opportunities of Padang State University Library

In the midst of the challenges faced, there are a number of opportunities that can be utilized by Padang State University Library to remain relevant and attract users. One of the main opportunities is the utilization of information

technology in library services. Given the rapid development of digital technology, libraries can adopt various technological innovations that can improve services and user experience. For example, the development of a digital library that allows users to access library collections online, be it books, journals, or scientific articles, can be a major attraction for users, especially students who need quick and practical access (Rahman, 2020).

In addition, the use of library applications that can be downloaded on smartphones can also be an effective solution. With these applications, users can search for book collections, borrow books online, access electronic journals, and even get information about activities or seminars organized by the library. This can increase efficiency and convenience for users in utilizing library services, without having to come to the physical location (Sari, 2021).

Another opportunity lies in the development of modern and technology-based learning spaces. Padang State University Library can innovate by creating study spaces equipped with advanced technological facilities, such as computers, projectors, and stable internet access. By providing a comfortable collaborative space, students can learn together in an atmosphere that supports creativity and collaboration. Such facilities will certainly attract students to visit the library more often and use existing services.

Collaboration with various parties, both internal and external, also opens up great opportunities. Internally, the library can work with faculties and study programs to provide collections that are relevant to curriculum needs, as well as support ongoing research programs. At the external level, collaboration with publishers or technology service providers can help the library in updating digital collections or developing better information systems. In addition, universities can also utilize grants or sponsorships to improve library technology infrastructure (Rahman, 2020).

Another important opportunity is to improve information literacy among students. Through training programs or workshops, libraries can help students understand how to access valid and quality information, and make the most of library services. By increasing students' awareness of the importance of reliable sources of information, it is expected that they will be more interested in utilizing the services offered by the library.

Strategies to Increase Library Interest

To take advantage of the opportunities and overcome the challenges, Padang State University Library needs to implement several strategies that can increase the interest of users. One of them is to increase promotion and socialization of the services available at the library. One effective way is through the use of social media and official websites to publish various digital services, the latest collections, and activities or events organized by the library (Kartika, 2018).

In addition, continuous training for librarians is essential so that they can master the latest technology in library management. Librarians who are skilled in using technology will be better able to provide better services to users. Thus, libraries can optimize the use of information technology to improve services,

both in the form of information access and in providing a more interactive and interesting experience for users.

Ultimately, the development of the Padang State University library in the era of information technology requires a joint effort between library managers, users, and various related parties. By utilizing technology optimally, improving information literacy, and innovating in providing services, the library can again become a relevant and interesting information center for users, and support a better educational process in higher education (Kartika, 2018).

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Base on the resultd of research on the challenges and opportunities of Padang State University Library in the era of information technology, it can be concluded that the library faces a number of significant challengs in attracting users. These challenges include shifting user behaviour that prefers easily accessible digital information sources, limited technological infrastructure that supports digital library services, lack of training for librarians in managing information technology, and low awareness of the importance of using valid and reliable information sources.

However, along with these challenges, there are various opportunities that can be utilized to increase the attractiveness of libraries. The utilization of information technology, such as the development of digital libraries, library applications, and technology-based learning spaces, can be a solution to answer the needs of users who are increasingly dependent on technology. In addition, collaboration with various parties, both internal and external, as well as increasing information literacy among students, are strategic steps that can increase the library's role as a relevant information center.

To overcome the challenges and take advantage of the opportunities, Padang State University library needs to develop a more innovative and adaptive strategy. Transforming the library to be more technology-based and focusing on services that facilitate access to information, will greatly help increase the interest of users, especially among students. In addition, effective promotion and capacity building of librarians will also support the expected changes.

Recomendation

Based on the conclusions that have been presented, here are some suggestions to improve the effectiveness of Padang State University Library in the era of information technology:

1. Technology Infrastructure Development

Padang State University Library needs to improve the technological infrastructure that supports digital library services. Procuring adequate hardware and software, as well as developing a more integrated library information system, will increase efficiency in services and make it easier for users to access information.

2. **Training and Competency Improvement for Librarians**

To optimize the use of information technology, librarians need to receive continuous training in managing digital libraries and technology-based information systems. Increasing the competence of librarians will ensure that library services can run well and in accordance with technological developments.

3. **Provision of Digital-based Services**

Libraries need to introduce digital-based services such as library applications that allow users to access collections of books, journals, and other scientific materials online. This will make it easier for students to access information anytime and anywhere, thus increasing their interest in using library services each study has limitations; thus, you can describe it here and briefly provide suggestions for further research.

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