

The Role of Depok Public Library in Fulfillment of the Information Needs of Depok Society

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Abstract

This research analyses the role of Depok Public Library in fulfilling the information needs of Depok society. Moreover, the purpose of this research is to analyse how the Depok Public Library manages its strategy to fulfill the information needs of its society. A qualitative approach with case study method is applied in this research. The data were collected through deep interviews, observations, and related document analysis. The result of this research shows that the fulfillment of the information need of Depok society is performed in two main strategies, those are internal and external strategies. Those strategies are conducted continuously and innovatively side by side with the progress and development if the information needs of Depok society itself.

Key Words: Information need, public library, role of depok public library.

1. Introduction

Laws No. 43 year 2007 states that the public library is a library that is intended for public as a tools of lifelong learning regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, race, religion and socioeconomic status. Philip Gill (2001) states that the primary purpose of public libraries is to provide resources and services in a variety of media formats to meet the needs of individuals or groups to education, information, and personal development including recreational and leisure time.

Essentially, the role of public library established and founded in a particular location is to fulfill the information need of its surrounding society. A public library is a type of library with a wide range of objectives to a heterogeneous society. The heterogeneous characters of surrounding society, makes public library holds great challenges to serve the information need of said society. This phenomenon impacts the library significantly in the material acquisition, services, and facilities owned by the library; the library must also be able to embrace all layers of society surrounding it.

The Depok Public Library has been established since 2008. In 2015, the library enhanced itself by creating a specific library building decorated with good quality materials, human resources, and services for Depok society. Keeping in mind that the library is progressing to a better quality, it is a must that the performance output is progressing to a better quality as well. The performance output can be seen through the fulfillment of the information needs of Depok society. The population of Depok society that must be served is 2.033.508 people from 11 districts and 63 villages. As a consequence, the information needs of those potential library users must be fulfilled, therefore the library should have a strategy to fulfill their information needs.

Based on the underlying problem, this research is performed to identify the strategy that has been conducted by Depok public library in fulfilling the information needs of Depok society. Therefore, the result of this research may become a positive advice for the library to develop and enhance another strategy to fulfill the information needs of its society.

2. Method

In conducting this research, the researcher uses a qualitative approach with case study method. The data were collected through interviews, observations, and document analysis. Interviews were conducted to several Depok Public Library staffs and patrons. To determine the number of patrons to be interviewed as informants, a purposive sampling method was used with age criterion (children, young adult, adult) and their residential address (close to the library), while the library staffs is limited to those who have been working in the library for more than 1 year.

Observation is performed by observing the strategy the library conducted in practice in fulfilling the information need of its surrounding society. Document analysis is done by picturing the statistical data of borrowing transaction of Depok library collections.

3. Finding

Depok Public Library was founded in 2008. In 2015, the Depok Public Library improved its services by creating a separate library building and supported by improving the quality of the collection, human resources, and the services and all facilities provided for all Depok society. Depok Public Library 's vision is to create services in the field of archives and create educational, recreational and entertainment library. That vision contains three main elements namely educational, recreational, and entertainment. Educational means that the services provided should give a didactic impact and as "a clever means to be clever". Recreational means that the services and infrastructure facilities are provided interestingly and creatively so it becomes recreational and cozy atmosphere to encourage reading interest to public officials of all users. Entertainment means that it should give different feels that is more entertaining for the visitors.

In achieving this vision, there are three missions that have been assigned by the Depok Public Library , namely: (1) Creating an archive management system as a source of information, historical evidence, legal evidence, proof of governance and research resources; (2) Creating educational, recreational and entertainment library service based on information technology; (3) Creating management capabilities and data processing for good governance through e-government.

Depok Public Library serves more than 2,033,508 people from 11 districts and 63 villages. Depok Public Library is a type of public library that has a role in fulfilling the information needs of the entire community in Depok. The fulfillment of information needs can be seen in the number of collections owned by the library. Currently, Depok Public Library has collection about 15.854 items. If compared between the number of collection and the population of Depok city, it is 1 : 128 at comparison. This shows that the collection should be increased. The types of collections owned by the library are novels, comics, biographies, psychology, and other general works.

The population of the Depok City who have registered as members of the library is 3.382 people consisting of various types of professions, namely: students, private sector employees, civil servants, and the public. The following Table 1 shows new members of the library in the period from June to September, 2016.

Table 1: The New Members of Depok Public Library
(June-September 2016)

Period	Occupation	Total
September	Students	57
August	Employee	171
July	Students	125
June	Students	152

Source : Result of research from interview, 2016

Based on the table above, it appears that the new members of the Depok Public Library in the period of June-September 2016 was dominated by students. This show that the awareness of the importance of being library members in the use of library facilities perceived by students. If we compare the collection availability with the total number of Depok Library members is 1: 4. Thus, it should be accompanied by the addition of selective collection according to the information needs of library users accordingly with increasing the number of members in Depok Public Library .

In meeting of the information needs of Depok society with various ages, Depok Public Library provides varied facilities. The facilities provided by the library are as follows: service space for children and elderly, reading room, computer room, referral room, space for Depok Corner and theater, and WiFi access that can help the users to access information outside the collections owned by the library. The provision of these services is intended as a strategy to meet the information needs of Depok Society.

Information needs contain three significance probabilities (Connor in Case 2012) those are “negotiated”, “help”, and “pertinent”. The information needs of each individual must be different from others determined by one’s interests.

Based on the interviews conducted, it is shown that there are different information needs in Depok society determined by background factor (individual occupation). Below is the table of information needs of Depok society grouped by their occupations.

Table 2: Information needs of Depok society grouped by their occupations
(June- September 2016)

Occupation	Information Needs Trend
K-12 Student	School tasks completion
College Student	College tasks completion
Public	To fulfill information regarding one’s hobbies
Teacher	To support educational process

Source : Result of research from interview, 2016

The variation of people’s occupation differentiates the kind of information they need. This is caused by the distinction of interests of each individual. There are

people who need information to help them complete school tasks, to teach, to deepen information regarding their hobbies, and other interests. Basically, there is one similarities between them, the information they need is virtually is a set of data they need to solve the problem they face.

In analysing the information need, it can also be examined through library material circulations. The availability of library materials is ideally a representative to the information need of the society they serve. As Pratap (2014) mentioned in his research about “role of public libraries in community development: a case study of T.S. Central State Library, Chandigarh”, he said that one of public library roles is to support the society needs, from children to adult.

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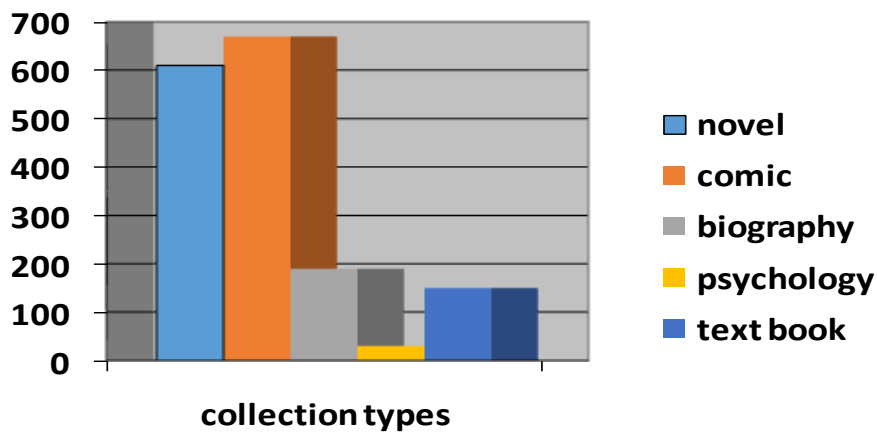


Chart 1: Data of borrowing transaction of Depok library collections (Period June – September 2016)

Source : Statistic of borrowing transaction of Depok library collections, 2016

The graph shows that the majority of Depok society tend to borrow materials containing fictional information such as comic book (670 transactions) and novel (610 transactions). Based on the graph, it can be said that one of the visions of Depok public library as an edutainment and recreational place has been achieved with such a many visiting patrons borrowing library collections relating to fiction works than non-fiction one. Consequently, the Depok society tends to utilise the library collections to entertain themselves with fiction works.

In fulfilling the information need of Depok society, the library must perform internal and external strategy. The internal strategy should tend to focus on the enhancement of library's human resources quality. To enhance the human resource, a technical mentoring relating to basic training to serve and manage library collections is conducted. This technical mentoring is conducted periodically once a year. In 2014, a technical mentoring relating to library practice and theory focused on Taman Bacaan Masyarakat (Public Reading Venue) and Village Library was conducted; and in 2015, a technical mentoring relating to library classification and metadata was performed; while for the year of 2016, a theme of library automation and school library is preferred for the technical mentoring. Meanwhile, the speakers for the mentoring activities are academicians and practitioners expert in their fields.

The internal strategy is not only implemented to enhance the human resource quality but also to the acquisition of library collections. In this regard, the library designs a collection request form so that their library collections meet society needs. The collections listed on this form then conveyed to the head of the library as a consideration to procure library collections. However, the budget limitation for library acquisition makes the library cannot procure all materials listed on the form.

In meeting the information needs of diverse users, Depok Public Library also conducts external strategy. External strategy is carried out by improving library services. Based on interviews with the library staff, there are several strategies that have been done by the Depok Public Library to meet information needs. One of those is utilization of the mobile library. The activity of mobile library is mobile everyday to visit schools in Depok, especially in elementary school. Every month, the Depok public library creates a route schedule to serve patrons on its mobile library. The target patrons of this mobile library is primary school students in Depok city. The reason why the library target the primary school children is because they still need early education to strengthen their motivation and interest to read. The schedule of this mobile library can be downloaded from the library website enclosed.

SENIN	SELASA	RABU	KEMIS	JUMAT	SABTU	MINGGU
			Perpustakaan Kecamatan Kecamatan 2 & 3			Perpustakaan Kecamatan Kecamatan 2 & 3
			Perpustakaan Kecamatan Kecamatan 2 & 3			Perpustakaan Kecamatan Kecamatan 2 & 3
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Figure 1: The Schedule of Mobile Library - August 2016

Source: <http://www.depok.go.id/tag/perpustakaan>

Besides of mobile library, another strategy implemented is to set up a story telling and short story writing competitions. These activities are aimed to fulfill the information needs of children in Depok city. This event is called by “Gerakan Pemasarakatan Gemar Membaca” and held periodically once a year. In 2016, during this annual event, book reviews and scientific works activities among young adult in Depok city are held. Based on interviews, this event has always received a positive response from the Depok society.

4. Conclusion

Depok Public Library focuses on the fulfillment of information needs among children especially school children in Depok. It would be good for the future should the library widen its wings to embrace their thought for the housewives. This thing matters and aimed so that the housewives in Depok city can utilise their spare time productively. The strategy that can be implemented for this new future target is to conduct information literacy for women who stay at homes such as sewing, cooking, and other skills that may establish independent women and to utilise their spare time productively.

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