

# Preserving Local Wisdom in the Leadership of Islamic University Libraries in Yogyakarta

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## Abstract

*This research tries to understand how the preservation of local wisdom in the leadership of Islamic university libraries in Yogyakarta, viewed from policies and programs that have been done, refers to the local value that is believed by people in Indonesia. The research is aimed at illustrating the importance of local wisdom values as a leadership identity in the libraries. The research employs qualitative descriptive approach. The results of the research show that the libraries of Indonesian Islamic University and Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University in Yogyakarta have already embedded the values of communal work and consensus as referent in every policy and solution for their problems.*

**Keywords:** *local wisdom, leadership, Islamic university library, UIN Sunan Kalijaga, Indonesian Islamic University (UII)*

## Background

Nowadays, internalization of local wisdom into library leadership concept is absolutely necessary and needs to be discussed in both academic and practical ways. The local wisdom has become important to be preserved in library leadership because it reflects original values of society. According to Sulisty-Basuki (2002, p. 29), a library in its history is created and maintained by the community as a means of preserving knowledge that will become a main capital to build a new civilization.

A library in its function of preserving local wisdom is not only limited to the preservation of heritage in the form of text, but also the experience values contained should become a philosophy of life inherent in the library leadership concept. According to John Budd and Anne Goulding cited in Lisa Hussey (2012, p. 48), the library has a role in the field of cultural production, such as facilitator, agent of preservation, builder of repository culture, and actor implementing cultural value in the management of libraries. In order to create a cultural values-based leadership, the libraries should be managed through local wisdom approach.

According to Ridwan in Wikantiyoso (2009, p. 6), local wisdom is a good behavior of people in relation to their environment. It is derived from religious values, customs, advices of ancestors, and local culture, which have scientifically awakened communities to adapt their surroundings. It is distinctively characterized as dynamic, continuous, and binds to the community.

The implementation of local wisdom in the library leadership is meant as a practical form of noble values among society. Setyowati (2013, p. 104) states that leadership is a process of influencing a group to achieve

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certain goals. According to Tikno Lensufiie (2009, p.16), leadership focuses on how to move people and lead them to change for a better and ideal life. Furthermore, Kumaran (2012, p. 157) says that there are some criteria that must be possessed by a leader, such as, setting direction and speed, giving motivation, disigning goals, and determining polices

Until now, the implementation of leadership at libraries in Indonesia has much more referred to Western leadership models which have differed historically with Indonesian culture. Consequently, disharmonization occurs in the role of libraries as a preserver of local wisdom and the philosophy of the local leadership due to the library leadership model employed not based on the value of local wisdom of society in which the library is located.

In fact, Indonesian people are very prosperous for their local wisdom values in the form of leadership and a variety of local policies can be used as a guideline for leaders. In Javanese culture, for instance the shape and the conception of leadership are multi variants. Even, every genre has different types. Nevertheless, those concepts are directed to a paradigm of balance. Generally, the teachings of leadership and wisdom of life are inherited from Javanese literature, in which many various concepts of leadership are created in that literature, and full of ideals embodied in the teachings.

In the libraries of Indonesian Islamic University (UII) and Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University, the local wisdom is considered as important heritage to be preserved. Without it, the cultural function of library will never emerge. Therefore this research takes place in both universities. The research is focused on how those libraries put the local wisdom in this leadership philosophy amongst the influences of foreign leadership models, such as American, European, and Japanese styles. This study is expected to find a role model in the implementation of local wisdom as the identity of library leadership that has been rarely researched

### **Research Method**

This study uses a qualitative and descriptive approach. According to Sugiyono (2010, p. 15), qualitative research is an approach method that is studied based on the natural phenomena, where researchers become a key instrument at research. Data validity is based on the technique of collecting data sources through a purposive and snowball sampling, gathering the data with triangulation and data analysis is done inductively. The results of the research emphasize more on meaning than generalization. Meanwhile, according to Moleong (2007, p. 247), qualitative research intends to understand the phenomena which are experienced by the subject of the study, such as behavior, perception, motivation, action, etc.

Descriptive study is aimed at measuring a certain social phenomena accurately. According to Singarimbun (2008, pp. 12-13), descriptive studies usually have two goals: to determine the development of certain physical and to describe particular social phenomenon in detail. Additionally, Sukmadinata (2008, p. 18) states that descriptive research aims to define a situation or phenomenon as it is. From these explanations, the descriptive studies are concluded as a research which tries to explain about a particular phenomenon in the form of words and languages in systematic way.

### **Value Base of Local Wisdom for Leadership**

The emergence of local wisdom as a heritage that must be maintained in social life is not something that appears suddenly, but it has been constructed since people have begun an interaction. According to Yunus (2013, p. 36), local wisdom is a culture of a particular society and a certain place that are considered to be able to survive in the face of globalization. It is because such local wisdom contains values that can be used as a means of building the nation's character. As a value base upheld by society, local wisdom is the accumulation of culture which according to Greetz (1992, p. 5), is regarded as a pattern of understanding or meaning, that is thoroughly intertwined within the symbols transmitted historically. A system regarding conception inherited in a symbolic form in which people communicate, preserve, and develop their knowledge and attitude toward life.

This definition empowers the strength to the position of local wisdom as a value base engendered by people. It is actualized through acts, which can be inherited to further generation through a process of interaction and communication. Finally, the authenticity of the identity of the future is maintained. As a rule of life, local wisdom should be manifested in much wider form that can be felt by everyone, ended the physical form. In the practice amongst community, the local wisdom should become as a philosophy of leadership for all leader. The existence of the philosophy according to Yunus (2013, p. 22) can be interpreted as a knowledge of investigating and considering all things in depth, seriously, and radically, so that until all matters are investigated and considered to achieve the essence of things. In the context of the leadership, philosophy is a milestone in any decision-making in the lead, because without a solid based, decisions produced will not become representative decision.

Base for decision making in the leadership has a meaning for those who are led and for sustainability of the leadership. According to Peter G. (2013, p. 5), a leadership is a process whereby an individual influences a group of people to achieve a common goal. In the process of leadership, a transaction occurs between leaders and followers, so that leadership is not something that is linear and not event in one direction, but the event is interactive. Without a strong foundation, it is impossible for leaders to influence their followers.

### **Local Wisdom Base in the Leadership of Libraries in Indonesia**

Library as an institution for preserving cultural heritage will have no great resonance if it is not supported by government and society through the regulation that favor the interests of local wisdom. Today, the region that has a great attention to the preservation of local wisdom is "Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta" which serves as a representation of the Javanese society. This value has been supported by local royal system which is still approved by the central government. It is the only special region in Indonesia. The privilege of Yogyakarta region has a positive impact on preserving local wisdom, which is highlighted on the philosophy of library leadership.

This is in line with the research of leadership conducted by Fauziah (2013), Munawaroh (2013), Maya (2013), and Ardiyani (2013) in several areas in Java. The research shows that the way used by leaders in the library employs a democratic approach. In this context, the meaning of democracy is the leadership exercised using the principles of togetherness. In local wisdom, it can refer to the philosophy of leadership by Ki Hadjar Dewantoro that says, "*Ingngarsa sung tuladha, ingmadyamangunkarsa, tut wurihandayani*". According to Sri Wintalan (2010, p. 66), leaders are expected to be a good model. In society, if there is a problem, they will provide motivation and spirit of life, and implement the principle of communal work and consensus in making decision.

In addition, the philosophy of Ki Hadjar Dewantoro is a representation of Javanese local wisdom. In Sumatra, we know a lot of proverbs living amongst society in Minangkabau, which has many meanings concerning on togetherness and wisdom. In a comparative research of communities between Minangkabau and Bugis conducted by Mina Elfira (2013, p. 18) found that in the culture of leadership, the society of Minangkabau recognizes several elements of local value that must be possessed by a leader. The first element is making decisions. It means that a leader must have a strong reason. The decision must be based on the consideration which produces conclusions that will be implemented in the leadership field.

The second element is that a leader must have a good character, fair, creative, hard-working, wise, thoughtful, polite, loyal, alert, brave, patient, disciplined, and pride. Furthermore, Mina Elfira (2013, p. 22-23), finds that a leader of Bugis should have four abilities. First, honesty, that means if there is someone who does wrong, a leader must give forgiveness. Second, clever, meaning that people are able to affect any action. Third, brave, meaning that people are not afraid to receive both bad and good news. Fourth, generous, meaning that giving food and drink all day and night is not for being praised. All those overviews of local wisdom can be found in the mentioned three regions. In principle, those regions have a similarit in a basic value. The similarity is found in the points that a leader should be a representation of society and is promoting the principles of honesty, exemplary, competence, communal works and consensus in every decision making. Local wisdom manifested in the philosophy of leadership is considerably a form of existence of cultural greatness.

### Preserving Local Wisdom Value in the Leadership of Libraries

The existence of local wisdom at the libraries is a manifestation of the role of libraries as institutions that are one of their functions is to preserve the culture of nation, locally and nationally. As an embodiment of the functions, without directives or orders to them, the practice of the local wisdom values into leadership is inherent. Decisions and policies issued by the library manager must become a reflection of the actualization of values preserved by library. The philosophy of leadership taken from the values of local wisdom does not ignore the existence of global culture.

The values of local wisdom have become a bind that hold any dissent and background owned by the library manager. In concerning on the implementation of the local wisdom, libraries of Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University and Indonesian Islamic University have practiced a value of local wisdom based on religious values. The existence of religious values and local wisdom does not impede and contradict each other.

#### A. The Implementation of the Local Wisdom Values at the Indonesian Islamic University (UII)

Since 1950, Indonesian Islamic University library (UII) has promoted a vision "making a library as an information center service for academicians of UII and learned societies that are based on a commitment for excellence, emphasis on Islamic service, and in accordance with the development of science and technology-based on global information technology". The vision is supported by a mission "Becoming a center of information access for a global society to become qualified university library. It is aimed at supporting the implementation of the teaching-learning process in order to help the implementation of Three Basic Function of Higher Education, namely education, research, and community service.

Libraries have professionally managed the emphasis on religious values, competency, professionalism, and local wisdom which are manifested in the leadership philosophy. This is similar to what an informant said as in the following:

"Philosophy that is used to lead library is to implement the culture of communal work and consensus used to solve problems encountered. The culture has built a togetherness that can make easy to solve out problems because we think we are together, and if there is a problem that occurs amongst librarians, when they are not involved in certain meeting of activities, leadership at all levels has accommodated through similar approaches and wise communication, such as discussing what and why the problems happen (interview conducted on 10 January 2017).

Communal work is one of the local wisdoms that imply togetherness. Everything is done on the basis of collectivity and working together. This togetherness can create a dynamic climate of organization and avoid a gap amongst librarians in terms of their involvement in a decision-making process. In a leadership there is found a process of delegation of power. Leaders do not dominate the activities, but rather distribute authority to every level of leadership, which occurs continuously. At every level of leadership, a decision is made by promoting the principles of consensus in order to avoid a gap of differences between libraries.

The existence of UII librarians who are mostly Javanese has made easy for the implementation of the consensus among them, albeit East Java and Yogyakarta traditions have differences in relation to the procedures for the submission of opinions. East Java is tougher, whereas Yogyakarta is softer in expression. Differences which are inherent in the way of delivering their opinion do not obscure the value of local wisdom practiced by the leaders and employees at the library because the principle of the communal work and consensus that are believed to have strengthened and unified their differences. This situation is supported by statements of an informant in the following.

"When there is a problem that emerges between parties of libraries, I will communicate persuasively to explain and ask for his/her opinion about the problems accrued and during discussion, they will discuss any problem of library thoroughly" (conducted on 10 January 2017).

This principle is a part of the spirit of consensus. When decision making is done collectively by a variety of parties involved in conflict, it would put individual problems into institute problems. At this point, local wisdom would become a basis for every problem solution and decision-making. When those principles are

successfully manifested, library stockholders will choose a vote in an attempt to realize vision, mission, and purpose of the library.

Beside of running the philosophy of communal work and consensus UIN library also conducts activities related to culture, as stated by the following informant:

“First, we promote library visit month which is conducted every academic year of students in cooperation with the faculties of Indonesia Islamic University. Given the nature of UIN library which is centered on the University library so that information base is centralized. In addition, it students and people outside UIN library are also targeted to introduce libraries, museums and temples, whose property is located within the premises of the library. Second, the annual book was also held. Third, the arts performances are conducted in order to cooperate with outsiders and students in the campus” (an interview conducted by informant).

This is done on the basis to strengthen a balance between local wisdom as a value base embedded in each librarian and library staff. Also, positions of the library as an institution that produces the cultural values in the form of collections of cultural heritage and cultural activities. This is in line with what is stated by Robertson (2005: 3) and Laugu (2013, p. 107) that the function of culture is usually known as the cultural program conceived as a program and a series of programs presented by the library that seeks to entertain, enlighten, educate, and involve adult and family audiences, especially in the disciplines of arts, humanities, science, public policy, or community issues. These types of programs are designed to illustrate ideas and issues, and seek develop independent learning.

Steps for such activities will be able to eliminate stigmatization of library. Library institution is not only doing culture preservation, but also practicing the contents of the collection which is preserved into the leadership concept that can bring togetherness to all of human resources elements in library. It is believed that those activities will work synergetically with the spirit of Islam as a base of the main institution where the library is located.

### **B. The values of Local Wisdom at Sunan Kalijaga Statet Islamic University Library**

Laugu (2013, p.89) explains that the existence of Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University library can not be separated from its main institution, Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University which was established on 26 September 1951 under Regulation 34, 1950. It was just until August 24 in 1960 under PP 11 1960, PTAIN Yogyakarta was merged into State Academy of Religious science (ADIA) which then became Jakarta State Islamic Institute (IAIN), al-Jami'ah al-Islamiya al-Hukumiyah, in Yogyakarta. Then, IAIN Sunan Kalijaga was transformed into Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University (UIN) on October 14 in 2004 based on Presidential Decree 50, 2004. The Library of Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University has been progressing in line with the shelter institutions. After the release of Minister of Religion No. 14 1988, the position of the library which had been structurally under the Secretary of the Institute has changed to a Technical Implementation Unit (UPT) of Library that has been structurally under the Rector in direct way.

The Vision of of Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University Library is “Developing UIN Sunan Kalijaga Library as a research library based on Islam and Science”. In order to realize that vision, the library has developed the following mission. First, developing excellent learning resources in the field of Islam and science. Second, improving access to research sources in the field of Islam and science-based information technology. Third, improving the quality of services in accordance with the development of information technology. Fourth, strengthening cooperation with relevant institutions to improve access to relevant sources.

Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University Library has been following the principles of organization that refer to the rules of government agencies. Likewise, the manager of UIN Sunan Kalijaga Library is a majority of civil servants. UIN Sunan Kalijaga is a state institution which is on control and governmental governance. Nevertheless, the leadership in the management of UIN Sunan Kalijaga library has regarded local wisdom as its value base.

Leadership implemented by the head of the library has been emphasized more on the empowerment at every level of leadership, in which the philosophy of local wisdom is also held as a principle of cooperation, despite

it seems very strong about the impression of family interaction. In the principles of local wisdom, the family interaction is part of the communal work. A careness between each other will support the success. It would be different meaning if the communal work is used for personal and private interests. Those interests may injure professionalism and competence amongst librarians or other library staff. Therefore, such situations will be a local wisdom that promotes wise action.

In the context of UIN Sunan Kalijaga library programs, there are found the values of local wisdom such activities as batik and paintings, exhibition as well as the use of traditional Javanese clothes in historically important days, like Yogyakarta City Unniversary, UIN Sunan Kalijaga Anniversary, Batik Day, etc. Those programs are important forms of translation of the value of local knowledge to library users and are understood for local cultural interaction. This is similar to what was presented by Jon Budd and Anne Goulding in Laugu (2013, p. 106) who see the role of libraries as a producer and disseminator of cultural capital and symbolic power or in other words, identify the means which make the library to function in the process of acquiring culture.

When the library as a cultural battle arena will further reinforce its presence as an anchor in maintaining the integrity of the cultural community, the essence of the library in managing local wisdom in this regard will be understood, not only in the form of symbolic or physical, but also in the philosophical sense, that the cultural resources managed by the library can be used as a foothold in the decision. It also can make that the role of libraries in the reproduction of customs through the perception of libraries as a leading figure in the field of cultural production is not reduced.

## Conclusion

Local wisdom implemented in the leadership of Indonesian Islamic University library is more inclined to the values of communal work and consensus, which are placed as an adhesive in strengthening the relationship between the human resources available at the library. Also, those values serve as a foothold in any decisions relating to the implementation of library activities. Meanwhile, in the library of UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, the local wisdom values that are more highlighted is mutual cooperation. Meaning of mutual cooperation relies on in the implementation of the library. In terms of their personal activities, there emerge forms of groups among librarians and staff. Therefore, local wisdom is performed in the form of cultural activities.

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