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# **The Relevance of the Five New Laws of Librarianship to the Development of Mosque Libraries in Indonesia**

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## **Abstract**

In today's world of information technology disruption, library science must adapt quickly and accurately. The true library will always play an important role as a center of knowledge, including the mosque library, which is a distinct type of library because the majority of its collections are religious in nature. This article intends to discuss the New Five Laws of Librarianship as proposed by Michael Gorman, who revised the Ranganathan concept. The concept will be tested to determine its applicability to the design of the mosque library development, which is tasked with providing services to the surrounding Muslim community. Gorman's principle that libraries serve humanity has a meeting point with the great ethos of mosque library managers in Indonesia. However, many things in the mosque library's management need to be updated, such as strengthening services, optimizing more modern facilities, and assisting wider stakeholders.

**Keywords:** Laws of librarianship, Literacy, Mosque library, Service

## **Introduction**

Libraries, as the heart of culture, are now expected to play a more active role in fostering an open and civilized information society. In the global context, we know the Sustainable Development Goals as a United Nations (UN) program that was ratified in 2015 and which is better known as the 2030 UN Agenda. The 17 SDGs are a global development agenda aimed at achieving a harmonious world order for humans and the planet. The International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) actively advocated for libraries to be involved in the program's implementation during its preparation because library networks have the potential to improve access to information, communication, and universal literacy culture. The agenda of the 83<sup>rd</sup> International Federation of Library Associations General Conference and Assembly in Wroclaw, Poland, August 19–25, 2017, reaffirmed that all libraries contribute to and support the UN agenda, which has become the program of all countries. The invitation from IFLA is not limited to one type of library, but to all types of libraries, including house of worship libraries.

According to Al-Krenawi (2016), mosques are places of worship for Muslims not only for congregational prayers but also for information transfer, knowledge sharing, and lifelong non-formal learning. Mosques' knowledge-sharing roles are now widely supported

by a variety of supporting facilities, one of which is the mosque library (Antonio et al., 2021). It is an institution or work unit that professionally manages written works, printed works, and recorded works through the use of a standard system that the mosque formed and developed to meet the needs of research, knowledge, information, religion, and recreation. The mosque library is a unique type of library because the majority of its collections are religious in nature, with special priority given to the congregation and the community surrounding the mosque (Perpustakaan Nasional, 2011).

Several studies have highlighted the importance of mosque libraries in educating the community. According to Laugu (2007), mosque libraries have grown into valuable assets in the Muslim community, contributing significantly to the advancement of human civilization and public literacy in social, political, and educational areas. According to Zuhdi (2010), mosque libraries play an important role in realizing a learning society, which is defined by a community that is aware of information and intelligent in selecting it, whether it is popular, religious, or scientific information. Meanwhile, Hariyah (2017) noted the role of mosque libraries in growing awareness of inclusion and empowering people to become more mature in religion and society. This empowerment is carried out, among others, by facilitating, educating, and accommodating the needs of the religious community without discriminating against the user community in terms of belief, class, and physical condition.

Several researchers present opposing viewpoints on mosque libraries in Indonesia. Some of them present positive facts, such as how the mosque library's management is almost entirely in accordance with good governance standards because it has realized management functions such as planning, organizing, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating (Rohmatin, 2017; Apriana, 2007). Other researchers, meanwhile, mention several challenges faced by mosque libraries, such as the lack of professional librarians (Maruyah, 2013) and many users who do not find the basic information needed despite finding other books that can add insight (Nurdianti, et al., 2015). The two distinct patterns of research findings suggest an important gap that needs to be addressed further; in particular, Mustolehudin (2009) and Erida (2019) emphasize the importance of strengthening mosque library management and assistance.

The thought that is widely referred to in the philosophical-conceptual context is the concept of the Five Laws of Library Science (Ranganathan, 1931), which is still widely recognized today. However, as information technology, the web, and the internet advanced, this science underwent a system revolution in which the manual concept became automated and the paper book concept became a digital book, and it will continue to evolve in accordance with the latest trends (Anwar, 2016). Michael Gorman, a visionary in the world of librarianship, was one of the pioneers of this new system revolution. With a lot of experience both in England and America, he has an important influence in the world of librarianship, especially in the field of cataloging. Gorman (1995) also published intriguing ideas, including one of his articles, *Five New Laws of Librarianship*.

This article aims to examine Gorman's ideas and find relevance to the development of a growing mosque library in Indonesia. The author believes that in order to meet the information needs of the region, libraries will develop flexible services to recognize the

cultural and social changes of society and adapt to the various changes in social life. This essay begins with a theoretical and historical explanation of the mosque and its function in literacy. Next, the author explains Gorman's thoughts on five new laws of library science. At the end of this post, I will consider some important aspects of Gorman's concept that can be used as the basic basis for developing a mosque library.

### **An Overview of Mosques and Literacy Services**

The term mosque is derived from the word *sajada-yasjudu-sujudan*, which means obedience and submission with respect or reverence (Al-Munawir, 2002). From that word arose the term "mosque," which refers to a location where all activities involving only obedience to Allah are carried out. This implies the mosque's breadth of meaning and function, which is not limited to the dimension of pure worship but includes all aspects of human activity, as long as the starting point and end goal is to serve God. The word "mosque" appears 28 times in the Qur'an, 22 times in the singular and 6 times in the plural. Among Muslims, the mosque has come to be known as the "house of Allah." This means that everyone has the same right to use the mosque, that they do not need a bureaucratic permit, and that they can use the mosque for free in a commercial sense (Al-Faruqi, 2001).

The mosque at the time of the Prophet Muhammad was still simple. It has a dirt floor, foundation rock 1.5 m deep, and 75 cm wide walls are built. For shade, palm leaves are used as roofing material with a height of 1.75 m, which is supported by palm trunks and transverse wooden beams (Ali & Shah, 2019). Next to the mosque, measuring 35 x 30 m, the Prophet Muhammad's residence was built, while on the other hand, a special room was provided for the poor muhajirin, who became known as ahl al-shuffah. In this humble mosque, the Prophet began to gather strength, consolidate Muslims, lay the foundations of multiculturalism with adherents of other faiths, and establish the small town of Medina as the center of civilization (Fathurrahman, 2015).

In general, the mosque serves two purposes. First, it serves a religious purpose by serving as a location for congregational prayer, dhikr, prayer, and i'tikaf. Second, as a center for coaching, education, consultation, compensation, and deliberation, it serves a social function. The inclusivity of the mosque's function, which does not exclude activities other than worship, is founded on several factors: (i) the condition of people who still strongly adhere to religious values and spirit; (ii) mosque builders' ability to link social conditions and community needs with mosque activities; and (iii) the implementation of social manifestations, both in leaders who become imams and in mosque rooms, which are used as centers for government activities, deliberation, and social services (Shihab, 2001). In short, the mosque is the distinguishing feature of an Islamic country or city; it is not only a symbol and reflection of Muslims' love for their God, but it also reflects the level of cultural development.

In its development, the mosque is present as a public space for the surrounding community. It not only organizes community interaction spaces, but it also serves as a hub for community interaction in terms of locating sources of information and knowledge (Nugraha, 2021). Supported by the national literacy campaign, the facts show that, in a short time, mosques have become the main agents of adult literacy (Erguig, 2017). Many

mosques now have libraries as a place for community learning, albeit sometimes only as a supplement. People can learn about various types of knowledge through the mosque's library and regular studies. As the mosque's literacy culture developed, the congregation was encouraged to make donations and provide assistance in the form of reading books for the mosque library.

The mosque library's primary role is to create a society that is aware of information and understands how to obtain and use information correctly, particularly in the field of religious knowledge (Effendi, 2020). To survive in an increasingly dynamic modernity, every Muslim must have a solid foundation in scientific tradition and the pursuit of knowledge. In addition to providing insight, this can be used to protect everyone from irresponsible ideas that are not based on scientific evidence. It is necessary to expand the actualization space for literacy activities in schools, universities, and places of worship. The literacy space in the mosque can provide an opportunity for Muslims to develop their scientific and literacy interests while also strengthening their spiritual side.

Rusdiyanto (2018) conducted a study on mosques as agents of preserving local wisdom and driving scientific literacy. The study describes a mosque in Java that offers a variety of activities, including *Ngaji Filsafat*, *Ngaji Tasawuf*, *Ngaji Serat Jawa Kuno*, Postcolonial Study, *Macapat* courses, and literacy activities such as the Writing Class. As a result of the activities carried out, the mosque was able to maintain its consistency through studies with Islamic nuances as well as a combination of historical and cultural localities.

Literacy in mosques is divided into two categories. The most important aspect is religious literacy, in the form of reading, writing, and Islamic lectures. Furthermore, social literacy in community activities is led directly by the mosque's imam or religious leader, through whose mouthpiece the public is mobilized. Even large-scale gatherings are usually held in mosques until death announcements, mutual cooperation, and other activities involving the mosque. In turn, the mosque community can become a literacy agent for the larger community.

### **Michael Gorman and The Five New Laws of Librarianship**

Michael Gorman was born on March 6, 1941 in Whitney, Oxfordshire, England. Early library education began with a 2 year course from 1964 to 1966 at Ealing Technical College (now Thames Valley University). During the course Michael Gorman had brilliant achievements by receiving the Cawthorne award for getting the best score on the exam. His professional career began with work at the British National Library in the bibliography section (1966-1972), then in the planning secretariat (1972-1974), and finally as head of the bibliographic standards office (1974-1977). Then from 1977 to 1988 he served as Director of Technical Services at the University of Illinois Library at Urbana, and from 1988 to 2007 he was Dean of Library Services at the Henry Madden Library, California State University. He is active in several Library Associations including LITA (Library Information Technology Association), even served as its president from 1999 to 2000, and also as president of the ALA (American Library Association) in 2005-2006.

He wrote several books, including *Future Libraries: Dreams, Madness, and Reality* (1995). Gorman contends that libraries can and should embrace advanced technologies

while remaining service-oriented repositories of organized information and knowledge. He claims that virtual libraries will diminish the impact of libraries on society, and as a result, he proposes a "human-oriented" approach to technology. In *Our Enduring Values* (2000), he considers the role of the library today, librarianship in the twenty-first century, what patrons and communities want from their libraries, the effects of new and changing technology on libraries, and ways to preserve librarianship's core values in the future. He discusses eight librarianship values that he believes are the guiding principles of the profession.

Gorman discusses intellectual liberty, rationalism, literacy and learning, access and equity, privacy, and democracy. He provides an excellent introduction to major library thinkers and theorists such as Melvil Dewey, S. R. Ranganathan, and Jesse Hawk Shera, as well as situating librarianship within a broader historical and philosophical context. Throughout *Our Enduring Values Revisited* (2015), he demonstrates a strong belief in the importance of libraries and librarianship in the new era.

Libraries are threatened with a second opinion because information is so easy to find by utilizing information technology. However, on the other hand, information technology can also be an opportunity to continue to develop libraries. Facing the change in the function of the librarian, Gorman's thoughts emerged about the *New Five Laws of Library Science* (1995), which are described in detail below.

#### *1. Libraries serve humanity*

According to Gorman (1995), the dominant ethic of librarianship is service to the individual, community, and society. He added, "*By service, I mean both individual acts of help and the furtherance of the higher aspirations of humankind. Beyond that, service in librarianship implies an attention to quality, a desire to live up to and surpass the expectations of library users.*" The key word in this first law is service. The basic principle of the library is to provide good service to individuals, groups, and society as a whole. The user's aspirations will be met with a humanist service. Humanist services are those that are based on quality, so that the library's services can exceed users' expectations. To serve in a humanist service, psychological encouragement is required (Anwar, 2016).

The fundamental distinction between Gorman's and Ranganathan's concepts in the First Law is one of service and utilization. Ranganathan's first law mentions books for use, specifically how books can be used optimally by users, where the library must consider aspects such as access tools, furniture, place arrangements, facilities, and promotions. Meanwhile, Gorman went even further by emphasizing humanist service in order to position librarians to serve wholeheartedly.

#### *2. Respect all forms by which knowledge is communicated*

Gorman (1995) emphasizes the importance of respecting all forms of scientific communication because each has advantages and disadvantages. Libraries will continue to use a variety of knowledge and information sources in the future, with the understanding that new communication media supplements and enhances existing media rather than replaces them. There is no reason to reject technology by insisting on printing on paper or creating images on film today. In some cases, the technology provides a cost-effective alternative. However, if it is deemed too expensive or has drawbacks, the previous

technology may be considered. The most important aspect is that the library be able to work with these alternatives.

### *3. Use technology intelligently to enhance service*

Gorman emphasizes the use of technology functions intelligently in helping to develop libraries in this third law. In contrast to Ranganathan's third law, every book has a reader, which attempts to reveal the methods used by librarians to find readers for every book in the library. According to Gorman (1995), the history of progress in librarianship has been a success story of the integration of new technology and communication tools into existing library programs and services. Intelligent technology use is more defined as finding solutions to problems rather than searching for interesting new technology applications, weighing cost effectiveness by calculating the costs and benefits obtained, considering the impact of each proposed service innovation, and rethinking service programs.

### *4. Protect free access to knowledge*

Libraries, as centers of social, political, and intellectual freedom, must provide free services. According to Gorman (1995), an important strength of a library is its ability to be a guardian of intellectual freedom and a provider of information quickly and precisely so that service users' trust can be properly built. If Ranganathan's concept saves readers time by providing efficient access, Gorman's concept emphasizes the importance of libraries as strong intellectual centers so that freedom is a non-negotiable right. With access to a variety of information sources, the user's trust will naturally develop.

### *5. Honor the past and create the future*

So far, there are those who reject new technology for a variety of reasons, while others have mocked the equipment of the past. Gorman (1995) attempts to find common ground from the standpoint of this fifth law, namely by preserving what was good in the past while balancing it with innovation for the future. Several concepts, such as library collections, library services, and library technology, have evolved along with the times. Some old concepts and technologies that are no longer useful must be discarded in order to achieve this, but old things that are still useful must be maintained. New concepts and technologies are not always good or bad, so they must be evaluated on a continuous basis.

## **Developing Mosque Libraries**

Following the presentation of the New Five Laws of Librarianship, the author will discuss the relevance of this concept for the development of mosque libraries in Indonesia in this sub. Libraries, information, and documentation are vital in the world of scientific records, where they are interconnected and mutually reinforcing. The dialogue of the concept of library science thinking into practical-implementation in the area of houses of worship libraries will be an important connecting bridge.

As a country with the world's largest Muslim population, Islam is practiced by 207 million Indonesians, or 87 percent of the country's total population (Statistics Indonesia, 2019). It is not surprising that the large number of religious people is also proportional to the number of places of worship built in the country, especially for Muslims. In 2021, the

estimated number of mosques in Indonesia will be 279,280 buildings spread throughout the country (Indonesian Mosque Information System, 2021). One of the mosque's facilities, the library, serves as a source of information, knowledge, and religious insight for the congregation and the surrounding community. However, the condition of mosque libraries in Indonesia varies, with some in good condition and others still not functioning optimally. Taking Gorman's ideas above as a starting point, here are some pointers that can be used as a foundation for managerial development steps, strengthening work ethic, and optimizing information technology-based facilities that are desperately needed to be realized.

### *1. Religiosity and Humanity*

Gorman's principle that libraries serve humanity intersects with the great ethos of mosque library managers, who are also servants of God's house. Respecting humanity entails paying complete attention to the community without regard to its social stratification. The Indonesian government's program policies also emphasize religious moderation, so mosques and their supporting networks are encouraged to present humanitarian-based Islamic activities such as social assistance and inclusive religious literacy. The administrators of the Istiqlal mosque in Jakarta and other major Indonesian cities have received training to strengthen religious moderation in accordance with the spirit of humanity.

Traditionally, Islamic religiosity is based on the holy text of the Qur'an, Surah Al-Anbiya 107, which declares Islam to be a mercy to all of nature. As a result, the ethos of religiosity can actually be integrated with humanism, giving birth to the concept of religious humanism, which views humans, their values, and their freedom as goals and that humans occupy an important position in front of God. Humanism does not conflict with religious obedience if it is understood to include belief in human values as well as human position, dignity, endeavor, and freedom. Humans must be empathetic and sensitive to the difficulties of others, as well as be able to express affection across primordial lines or other social barriers. Most Muslims' lived religiosity is not an impediment to civic engagement; rather, active participation in mosques tends to enhance their active citizenship (Peucker, 2018).

Based on the foregoing, if the mosque library is managed by people who animate the spirit of the mosque in the sense that all of its activities are aimed at improving human dignity by elevating the interests of users, then this unit will have solid roots from which to grow. They will describe their librarianship as a religious obligation, and they will believe that serving humanity is a fundamental aspect of lived religion.

The principle of serving humanity can help mosque library managers better understand the nature of the services provided. The facts show that this humanist attitude has been well implemented in a number of mosques. According to Jabbar (2015), the library services of the Al-Markaz Al-Islami Mosque in Makassar have demonstrated attitudes and performance consistent with the spirit of humanism. Muliana et al. (2016) reach the conclusion that the PUSDAI Mosque Library in Bandung City has a good category response in terms of the physical environment, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and emphases, even the level of user satisfaction is very good.

## *2. IT-based Service Optimization*

Gorman's second and third library laws emphasize flexibility in facility use and appropriate technology to maximize service. True, library services are intended to cultivate information literacy in the midst of society, namely a community capable of finding, localizing, compiling, and utilizing information for something useful. This is the definition of a smart society, which will be created through the active role of libraries. The service factor becomes very important to note in order to realize the library's active role.

According to the Ministry of Religious Affairs' Guidelines for the Management of Mosque Libraries (2019), the mosque library is expected to be more than just a place to store books, but also a comfortable learning environment for users. The Grand Mosque library has at least 4,000 titles; the Grand Mosque has at least 3000; the Grand Mosque has at least 2000; and the Jami Mosque has at least 1000. While the collection is in the form of printed manuscripts, recorded documents, and digital documents.

In fact, many mosque libraries in Indonesia have underperformed because they only house books and other religious collections, particularly at the sub-district and village levels. This is in contrast to mosque libraries at the district and provincial levels, which are generally good and meet the congregation's needs for Islamic literacy. As a result, mosque libraries must be developed so that their managers can meet the information needs of library users. Librarians must be able to quickly follow the development of information at this time, particularly in mosque libraries where Islamic insight is added informally to every Muslim. Professional guidance from relevant ministries for mosque library managers will result in a favorable user perception, ensuring that the mosque library is always used by the surrounding community.

Library management to improve community literacy must be prioritized, especially given that many mosque libraries already have adequate infrastructure but are managed by staff who do not have a librarian background. In this context, several Indonesian universities have provided assistance in the form of community service. For example, a small team from the State Islamic University of Imam Bonjol Padang assisted the Umami Mosque Library in Alahan Panjang with improving the community's reading culture from an early age, searching for information, and improving library services through simple promotional programs such as tricks to determine name, logo, poster, exhibitions, and so on. The service's implementation begins with socializing the importance of current information literacy for the community, improving mosque library services through library promotions and movements to increase public interest in reading, and providing training related to information retrieval strategies and an introduction to popular databases (Erida, 2019).

These activities produced positive results and piqued the managers' interest in further development. This is expected to serve as a catalyst for the establishment of additional mosque libraries in other cities throughout Indonesia. Recent developments show that the emergence of open source software for library automation systems, such as Senayan Software, is now being widely used by mosque libraries to replace manual tasks with computerized ones (Mufid, 2014). As a result, there is no longer any reason for mosque libraries to not automate their libraries, which previously required large

investments. This application is simple to use and can be customized and developed by users to meet the specific needs of each mosque library. This application is simple to use, and users can customize and develop it to meet the unique needs of each mosque library.

### 3. *Future-oriented*

A well-functioning mosque library has a variety of current and up-to-date information and collection sources. Gorman's principle of respecting the past while creating the future is relevant to Indonesian Muslims' religious principle, "*Al-Muhafadzah ala al-qadim al-shalih wa al-akhdz bi al-jadid al-ashlah*" (maintaining the good old things and taking new things that are better). A number of mosques in Jakarta and other cities such as Surabaya, Medan, Semarang, Yogyakarta, Palembang, and Banda Aceh have repositioned mosques in a broader sense, particularly by adopting management patterns that are relevant to contemporary demands, including management of their mosque libraries.

Because of the changing nature of the business environment, library management in modern times has moved beyond the traditional way of "doing things". Most libraries are powered by sophisticated information technology (IT), which enables a wide range of tasks and activities to be carried out in a variety of ways. These technologies allow for faster information processing and transfer between locations within and across libraries. It has also enhanced management practices and functions such as planning, organizing, staffing, leading, and controlling (Cascio & Montealegre, 2016).

Based on this, a systemic approach needs to be put forward. The systems approach to managing the mosque library views the organization as a system with interrelated parts, namely the whole is the sum of different parts. According to Olum (2004), he analyzed a system from four different aspects, namely: (i) inputs include resources, raw materials, money, technologies, and people; (ii) processes include planning, organizing, motivating, and controlling; (iii) products or services are the outputs; (iv) outcomes that include improved worker or customer productivity and quality of life. As a result, the library is viewed as a complete system with other subsystems that collaborate as a part of the whole. This means that the mosque library serves as an extension of both the Muslim community and the local government. These stakeholders are responsible for the mosque library's future in their respective areas. Because of the many changes in the business environment that will inevitably affect community life, such as information technology, changing needs, customer preferences, member job diversity, and socio-cultural aspects, this systems approach is relevant in 21st century organizations.

To realize this dream, all stakeholders in the mosque library, particularly the community in the sense of the mosque community, must be involved. The community can participate as managers, developers, resource people, and even supervisors, in addition to being library users. In a number of areas, the community's role as a contributor to books has been demonstrated to be extensive; all that is required is the community's involvement in the management and utilization to foster a sense of belonging and gain unending support. As a result, it is hoped that a symbiotic mutualism will develop between the library and the community. Libraries educate the community, and the community ensures the library's long-term viability.

If this mutualistic cooperation is successful, the mosque library will play an important role in empowering the community, especially given the demographics of the Indonesian population, which has a low level of education. According to data from the National Planning and Development Agency, only 8% of Indonesians have a bachelor's degree, with the remaining 92 percent having completed elementary, junior, and senior high school. This uneducated society cannot be allowed to face the various demands of an uncertain future life. A good example of cooperation that has already been established between the National Library and the University Libraries is something that should be expanded.

The scope of this mutual understanding includes the development of human resources in the field of libraries, ICT development, the development of the national catalog database, the Indonesia One Search digital repository (IOS), the joint development and utilization of library collections, scientific meetings, research and joint publications in the field of libraries, the collection and preservation of printed and recorded works, the implementation of library promotion and marketing, and the implementation of library promotion and marketing. Finally, the mosque library has a lot of work to do in order to take advantage of the most recent technology, improve the professionalism of its managers, and build cross-sectoral collaboration with various parties in order to achieve the desired future.

## **Conclusion**

The conclusion I can draw from the preceding discussion is that the mosque library, as a form of community service, occupies a strategic position in the life of the Muslim community, as evidenced by a long history of experience. The public expects librarians to improve their ethos, products, and services. On the basis of a high-humanism work attitude, it would be capable of producing satisfaction in the hearts of users. Mosque libraries must also use cutting-edge ICT facilities and resources that have the potential to change the way libraries acquire materials, process them, and disseminate information to the general public. In short, the proper and contextual application of Gorman's five laws of library science will greatly assist the development of services, promotions, and user satisfaction, all of which stem from the work ethic and professionalism of mosque library managers.

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