

Research Article

Collaboration of Library Ambassadors and Librarians Towards Excellent Service at the University of Muhammadiyah Surakarta Library

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ORCIDSuansah: <https://orcid.org/0009-0000-3817-6798>**Abstract.**

A sound library is a library that can accommodate the needs of users quickly, precisely, and accurately. To meet good library standards, supporting human resources is also needed to carry out various functions and roles of the library. Therefore, this article describes the UMS library ambassador program as a collaboration strategy between students and librarians towards excellent service. The research method used in this article is a qualitative method with a documentation and literature study approach. Data is obtained through the collection of documentation for the implementation of the UMS library ambassador program and literature available physically and electronically. Furthermore, the collected data is analyzed and processed to be presented as descriptive descriptions. Based on field documentation studies, the presence of library ambassadors is beneficial for library services in various lines. Library ambassadors are quickly able to represent librarians in providing comprehensive and excellent services so that users are greatly helped in meeting their needs. Library ambassadors are a solution and a new paradigm *agent of change* where students become literacy promoters to the academic community in their environment.

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1. Introduction

A library is an institutional body that requires human resources in it. Human resources in this institution not only focus on the librarian profession but also require other human resources who have their respective roles and functions to synergize with each other to achieve the goals of the library, namely excellent service to users. Law Number 43 of 2007 Article 14 [1] concerning Library Services states that library services are carried out excellently and oriented for users' interests.

A library that can provide services that suit users' needs is sound. Haryono stated [2] that the success of libraries in providing quality services to the community or users is a benchmark for a sound library. The same thing was also expressed Mukarom et

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al. [3] that excellent service is defined as “*excellent service*,” which means good or outstanding service. Thus, excellent library service is the best library service provided by library staff to users to provide optimal satisfaction. User satisfaction, increased user loyalty, increased number of visitors and service quality, and increased library value are the goals and objectives of libraries providing excellent service.

Excellent service is influenced by several elements that constitute an integrated whole, including speed, accuracy, friendliness, and comfort. The speed in question is the speed of service as consumers. Of course, all users want fast library services. The accuracy of service: When librarians help find the library materials needed quickly and precisely according to the needs of users, of course, users will appreciate the officer’s help. The speed and accuracy of service, accompanied by the hospitality of librarians, will make users feel welcome by the library so that they will feel happy and loyal to use the library again. No less crucial supporting element is the convenience of library services because it can determine user perceptions in utilizing library services. This aligns with Lutfi’s statement in Nababan (2010) that the basic concept of excellent service must meet six elements: *ability*, *attitude*, *appearance*, *attention*, *action*, and *accountability*.

The main benefit of excellent service [4] is that library resources in collections, facilities, and services provided can be utilized optimally by users so that pretty expensive library assets can be used to improve users’ quality of life. Furthermore, excellent service improves library performance, the relationship between users and library staff, library image, and user loyalty. In addition, the benefits of excellent service can also be seen from the side of users, library staff, and the library itself. For users, the benefits obtained are fulfilling information needs, getting satisfaction because they are more valued and cared for, and getting more quality services. For library staff, it is an increase in self-confidence, self-satisfaction, and pride, feeling calm and happy to work, more enthusiasm in activities because there are many friends, and a better self-image. For libraries to strengthen their existence as supporting units, it is easier to obtain support for funds, morale, energy, etc. Libraries have a more incredible opportunity to continue to grow and have more value to compete with other units, and their parent institution increasingly feels their role.

UMS Library is the central heart that plays a significant role in supporting the objectives of its parent institution, which is to provide services to the academic community and the surrounding user community relevant to the Tri Dharma of Higher Education program. The library has many work programs that require reliable and dexterous human resources. However, over time, the number of UMS library employees has decreased due to some entering retirement and mutations in the UMS environment. Libraries

cannot be avoided if more library staff are needed in other units to optimize overall UMS performance.

Library human resources are the spearhead and driving force of library services. Therefore, for library services to continue to run well, the Library Ambassador program is an option for UMS libraries to help with library activities. According to KBBI [5], an ambassador is a person or representative sent to perform a particular task. The definition of ambassador, in general, is a delegate or ambassador who has a role in carrying out particular tasks that will be carried out by the instructions of the institution he shelters. Libraries, like other institutions, should metamorphose adopting ambassadors in realizing the vision and mission of the library.

UMS Library involves students as Library Ambassadors so that services remain current and up *to date*. They are young people who allow more technological literacy and can develop brilliant ideas for the library's progress so that the user community can still feel the library. The presence of ambassadors is expected to be able to collaborate with officers in library services. The collaboration is a "*Cooperation*" between Librarians and Library Ambassadors in realizing excellent service in UMS libraries. This is in line with what was expressed by Barber (2020) that library ambassadors who support creating a high-quality learning environment in Southampton Solent University libraries, such as assisting users in tracing information resources in libraries providing IT-based services in library services [6]. Furthermore, mentioned that the ambassador program can also be an effective promotional strategy in promoting libraries because libraries can communicate directly and get direct user feedback [7].

Thus, this article aims to describe the UMS library ambassador program. The urgency of writing this article is to provide an overview of the library ambassador program at UMS as a collaboration strategy between students and library staff towards excellent service, where UMS library ambassadors are divided into two categories, namely general service ambassadors and special service ambassadors. This article is expected to be a reference or adapted by other libraries.

2. Methods

The research method used in this article is a qualitative method with a documentation and literature study approach. A documentation study is a collection of documents and data needed in research, which is then reviewed to support and increase the trust of research as an authentic work [8]. Data is obtained through the collection of documentation for the implementation of the UMS library ambassador program and literature available physically and electronically. Furthermore, the collected data is

analyzed and processed to be presented as descriptive descriptions. The presentation is done descriptively so that the findings are more accessible for readers to understand.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. UMS Library Ambassador

Library ambassadors are one of the flagship programs of UMS libraries. Library ambassadors are library representatives who come from students to inform UMS library programs or activities of the entire UMS academic community. The Missouri Library explained the same thing [9] that Library Ambassadors bridge students with users so that the library is used well. Librarians and library ambassadors collaborate in promoting library resources and providing services to the academic community for a better campus ecosystem supporting higher education's tri-dharma. Furthermore, according to Autry, library ambassadors are student representatives who support library work programs and contribute to improving library services to users [10].

UMS Library Ambassadors are recruited to participate in helping library service activities, promoting the latest services and services in the library, and collaborating with librarians to run and develop library activities so that excellent service can be achieved according to the library's objectives. According to Rosniar [11], library ambassadors are the biggest supporters of libraries in various ways because they have more knowledge about libraries. Library ambassadors will gain valuable experience working with librarians and other staff because they represent the library as knowledgeable, polite, and capable companions in providing user services (Autry, 2023).

The library empowers students to become library ambassadors to realize the role of students as *agents of change* in the scope of information literacy. On the other hand, library ambassadors are expected to be able to be a liaison between users and libraries to convey all the information users need. The age difference between library ambassadors and students who are close apart is expected to make communication between users (students) more effective. It is different if users face librarians or other staff with a reasonably long age range (*gap of age*) and different positions, making users (students) feel awkward, reluctant, or embarrassed. Users are expected to be more comfortable with the presence of library ambassadors who are ready to assist while their friends remain relaxed, but the results obtained are right.

UMS library ambassadors are divided into two types of ambassadors, namely special service library ambassadors and general service library ambassadors. Special service ambassadors run library programs related to information literacy, namely using e-journal

databases such as Scopus, Springer, Cambridge, and others. In addition, it also provides services to users related to Mendeley and Turnitin. Special service ambassadors help librarians provide information about what e-journal databases are subscribed to by UMS libraries, how to create a journal access account subscribed to by the library, how to access journals in the library, and guide users to find journal articles that match the topics needed by users. A general service ambassador assists librarians in general service duties such as circulation, information, shelving, administration, and other related tasks. Special and general service library ambassadors synergize as librarian partners in carrying out their daily duties.

The criteria that students must meet to become UMS library ambassadors are 1) Students at least semester 3, 2) Information technology responsiveness, 3) High interest and commitment in work, self-development, and public service, 4) Active communication, 5) Dexterous, thorough, tenacious and persistent. The requirements to become a UMS library ambassador are 1) Attach a concise CV (max two pages), 2) Attach a KTM scan. KHS, KRS, 3) Attach complementary documents (certificates, etc.) or competency support (if any), 3) Recent 3x4 photos, 4) Add a video about self-introduction (max duration 2 minutes).

The recruitment of UMS library ambassadors begins with socialization in the form of pamphlets via email to all students, the website, and Instagram of the UMS library. Applicant students who meet the requirements and criteria can participate in the selection. The selection was carried out through five stages, namely: 1) The first stage of the interview and the Qur'an reading ability test, 2) The second stage of the Islamic and Muhammadiyah written test, 3) The third stage of the basic computer skills test (Microsoft word and excel), 4) The fourth stage of the written collection/shelving ability test, 5) The fifth stage of the collection/shelving skills test.

The interview test aims to explore the motivation and purpose of students wanting to join as ambassadors in the library and assess their attitude and speaking ability. Test the ability to read the Quran to find out how fluent they are in reading the Quran.

Al Islam and Kemuhammadiyah (AIK) wrote a test to determine daily habits and how committed Islam is. AIK is indispensable as a foundation for behaving and living under the auspices of the Muhammadiyah Institution. AIK as "*authorized capital*" or essential capital in carrying out duties as a library ambassador who upholds the values of academic integrity. This follows the mandate contained [12] in the UMS Rector's Decree concerning the Policy for Assuring the Integrity and Quality of Education at the University of Muhammadiyah Surakarta, which reads: UMS Academic Integrity is the basis for determining the formation of authentic quality of UMS. UMS Academic Integrity is a manifestation of the values carried out by UMS, namely: 1. Tawhid (awareness of the

unity between knowledge and value), 2. 'ILM (rational-transcendental, objective, critical, innovative, creative, open), 3. amanah (honesty and responsibility), 4. 'Adl (justice and human welfare), 5. Caliph (height of human nature and dignity), 6. istishlah (welfare of the universe), 7. 'worship (man's devotion to God).

Furthermore, the primary computer proficiency test aims to determine the extent of the ability of prospective library ambassadors to operate computer devices and digital-based services along with the increasing function of the library as a Digital Service Center. The written test and collection/shelving skill test are intended so that ambassadors have the knowledge and ability to organize collections in the form of printed books and journals according to the location of the collection. This aims to facilitate information retrieval so students can find the collection they are looking for precisely, quickly, and accurately according to the collection call number listed in the library's online catalog.

After going through a series of tests and assessments by the board of examiners (Library Stakeholders), the results of participants who passed the competency selection will be announced. Participants who pass the selection will be equipped with training before serving as library ambassadors. The service period of the library ambassador ends after the ambassador is declared to have graduated from college (graduation).

During the pandemic, UMS libraries did not recruit Library Ambassadors. UMS Library reopened the recruitment of ambassadors in September 2022. The number of applicants who participated in the selection was 61 people. In contrast, the number of applicants who met the qualifications and were declared to have passed the selection was 30 students consisting of 10 special service ambassadors, 15 general service ambassadors, and five people as backup if there were participants who resigned. The recruitment process for Library Ambassadors can be seen in the documentation below:



Figure 1: UMS Library Ambassador Recruitment Test (source: UMS Library Documentation) .

3.1.1. UMS Library Ambassador Training

In carrying out their daily duties, Library Ambassadors must understand the concept of excellent service in a library. Library Ambassador Training contains material on excellent service and library management as a provision for several students who have passed the Library Ambassador selection to carry out their duties later. In general, library ambassador training aims to make Library Ambassadors know and understand the concept of library management, understand the minimum standards in performing excellent service, be able to communicate more actively and with quality, and be able to work following the concepts and standard rules in excellent service in a library.

Training is expected to help them find and find solutions to problems that arise in library services. The UMS Library's motto is to serve wholeheartedly to achieve achievements as a reference and reinforcement for all library human resources at work. The Library Ambassador training process can be seen in the documentation below:

3.1.2. Excellent Service Training



Figure 2: *Excellent Service Training* (source: UMS Library Documentation).

3.1.3. Library Management Training



Figure 3: *Library Management Training* (source: UMS Library Documentation).

In addition to receiving the two pieces of training above, special service library ambassadors as librarian partners in the use of e-resource databases receive more intensive training to carry out their daily duties because information literacy services such as Mendeley, Turnitin, Scopus, Springer, Cambridge, Sinta, National Library e-resources and other e-journals require special skills in practicing them. This is like

what has been done in the library of East Tennessee State University, where library ambassadors are drawn from various majors at the university and then trained in information literacy materials for two semesters to assist students or users in compiling in-depth research [13]. The difference is that at East Tennessee State University, the library ambassador is returned to serve in his home faculty, while at UMS, the library ambassador is in charge of the central library. The increasing demand for turnitin is also the basis for consideration of UMS libraries to involve ambassadors in the checking process. From January to December 2022, there were 1076 requests to activate and renew Turnitin accounts in the Library. Turnitin is an essential part of maintaining the originality of scientific work. With more intensive training, special service ambassadors are expected to be more proficient and proficient in guiding users in need.

With extraordinary service ambassadors, it is expected to further optimize information literacy services to users in need and to support the *Outcome-Based Education (OBE)* program that the University is promoting. OBE is a paradigm shift from *Input/Process-Based Education* to *Outcome-Based Education*. Encourage each study program to formulate its graduates' competencies in the form of comprehensive Graduate Learning Outcomes (CPL), including attitudes, knowledge, and skills following the graduate profile and competency level according to the level of the Indonesian National Qualifications Framework (KKNI). This OBE program [14] is following the Rector's Decree Number 84/II/2022 concerning Guidance, Examination, and Assessment of Thesis/Final Project, Thesis, and Dissertation Outcome *Based of the* University of Muhammadiyah Surakarta which states that in order to support the implementation of the UMS curriculum, it is necessary to strive for programs that can improve students' ability to produce outputs (*Outcome Based*) Thesis / Final Project, Thesis, or Dissertation in the form of published scientific articles or other equivalent innovation talent development works.

After the training, library ambassadors are ready to carry out tasks according to their job descriptions. The UMS library ambassador job description is outlined in the table below.

TABLE 1: Job description of UMS Library Ambassador.

NAME	TASKS SECTION	WORK
Library Ambassador 1	Scopus Corner, E-Journal, Mendeley, Turnitin and Information (Front Liner)	Serving consultations and utilization questions regarding Scopus, e-journals (Springer, Cambridge, Sinta, and National Library e-resources), Mendeley, and Turnitin quickly, precisely, friendly, and responsibly.
		Socializing using Scopus e-journal (Springer, Cambridge, Sinta, and National Library e-resources), Mendeley, and Turnitin to the entire academic community, especially students, appropriately, friendly, and responsibly.

TABLE 1: Continued.

NAME	TASKS SECTION	WORK
		Assist information officers in responding to user inquiries about library services and library activities in a friendly and responsible manner.
		Ensure that each user logs in using one card and fills out a visit list on the computer quickly, precisely, friendly, and responsibly.
		Assist librarians in maintaining safe, comfortable library conditions (such as allowing users not to wear jackets, dress modestly, and following Library regulations) and other duties related to the initial entry of library users) in a friendly and responsible manner.
		Assist Information Literacy activities (incidental) quickly, precisely, friendly, and responsibly.
		Other tasks related to Scopus services, e-journaling (Springer, Cambridge, Sinta, and National Library e-resources), Mendeley, and Turnitin quickly, precisely, friendly, and responsibly.
Library Ambassador 2	Cashier	Serving payment transactions for library users appropriately, friendly, and responsibly.
		Help serve photocopies quickly, precisely, friendly, and responsibly.
		Other duties related to cashier service are friendly and responsible.
Library Ambassador 3	Administration Services	Assist administrative officers in serving administrative service activities such as thesis submission, making membership cards, activation , and other related tasks quickly, precisely, friendly, and responsibly.
		Assist administrative activities such as creating data, recapping letters, organizing files, and other related tasks appropriately and responsibly.
Library Ambassador 4	Circulation Services	Shelving (arranging circulation collections to bookshelves) quickly, precisely, and responsibly.
		Help users browse the required collections and related tasks quickly, precisely, friendly, and responsibly.
Library Ambassador 5	Reference Services. Periodicals & Reserves	Shelving reference books, periodicals, and backups quickly, precisely, and responsibly.
		Serving users and other tasks related to Reference, periodical, and Reserve services quickly, precisely, and responsibly.
Library Ambassador 6	Promotional Services, KKI, and IT	Help manage UMS Library social media (IG, TikTok, Facebook, and Twitter). It is precise, friendly, and full of responsibility.
		Help write news on the website and manage the UMS Library website responsibly.

TABLE 1: Continued.

NAME	TASKS SECTION	WORK
		Helping massive promotion related to UMS Library services and policies through various media to the entire academic community, especially students, quickly, precisely, friendly, and responsibly.
		Helping to design posters, flyers, and other promotional media about the UMS Library quickly, precisely, and responsibly.
		Assist other tasks related to Promotion, KKI, and IT services quickly, precisely, friendly, and responsibly.
Library Ambassador 7	Technical Services (Processing & Procurement)	Assist in finishing books (labels, covers, etc.) appropriately and responsibly.
		Helping the new Book Check come in accurately and responsibly.
		Assist other tasks related to technical services appropriately and responsibly.

Source: UMS library documentation

In carrying out their duties, library ambassadors work part-time according to their college schedules. The agreed UMS library ambassador schedule can be seen in the picture below:





Figure 4: UMS Library Ambassador Schedule (source: UMS library documentation).

While some samples of UMS library ambassador activities in providing services to users can be seen in the table below:

TABLE 2:

Event Name	Photo Attachments
<p>Scopus ambassadors are providing scopus-related services to users.</p>	
<p>Mendeley Ambassadors are providing services using Mendeley to users.</p>	
<p>Data is providing locker key services to users who will enter the library.</p>	
<p>The ambassador is shelving books on the Shelf.</p>	

TABLE 2: Continued.

Event Name	Photo Attachments
Ambassadors are helping users search for books in the catalog on computers.	
The ambassador is processing the read-out book.	

Source: UMS library documentation

These are some samples of ambassador activities documented in the UMS library. Special service library and public service library ambassadors continue to receive supervision from librarians during their duties. Ambassadors finish serving as UMS library ambassadors after they graduate from college and attend graduation.

4. Conclusion

A sound library is a library that can provide quality services according to the needs of users. Library human resources and motors drive library services are at the end spears. Therefore, the UMS library recruits Library Ambassadors to collaborate with librarians and other library staff to provide excellent service so that users feel satisfied and loyal to the UMS library. Excellent service is influenced by several elements that constitute an integrated whole, including speed, accuracy, friendliness, and comfort. Library ambassadors are representatives of UMS students who have met the qualifications, taken a series of tests and received training in excellent service and library management. Thus, library ambassadors, librarians, and other staff are expected to synergize in carrying out daily tasks quickly, precisely, friendly, and responsibly. The library ambassador program also provides opportunities for students to develop their potential and gain valuable experience working with librarians and staff.

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