INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF RECORD SPECIALIST PROFESSION IN INDONESIA

Ike Iswary Lawanda
Library Science Program, Department of Library and Information Science
Faculty of Humanities, Universitas Indonesia
iswari@ui.ac.id; iswary2015@gmail.com

Abstract

The institutionalization of record specialist profession is a way of the profession incorporation with the archivists (functional occupation based arsiparis) and professions in the life-worlds of Indonesian people nowadays. It helps record managers in organizations of various types and business to have better lives and positions getting accepted according to the values and job tasks they have performed to elevate the organization. The methods of observations, interviews, and focused group discussions are conducted to ground the meanings in this topic of interest within the span of three years time around 2015 – 2017. The result shows that institutionalization of the profession promotes the values of the individuals as members of the profession, in a way bring up resistance and accommodation to the archivist association members in facing the imaginary profession of record specialist. Record specialist is a profession carried out by citizens responsibly and dignity to and for the country, while record specialist individuals are the agents that continue to improve themselves under the regulator of independent associations. Recognition of independent record specialist profession takes place in non-territorial boundary. The interconnection between various and diasporic cultures and a record specialist’s way of life flow within the institutionalization of the profession.

Keywords: institutionalization, record specialist, profession, recognition.

Background

Record managers in Indonesia cry out their marginalization and express the pre-eminency of their work in various national seminar and conferences, for example the national conference of university archive strengthening and empowerment. A record or archive manager in Indonesia is called as an archivist according to the Law No. 43 of 1979. Archivist is a special functional position for civil servants in government offices. A functional position in a government organizational structure does not allow one to be a decision maker. On the other hand, record managers work in all organizations in the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia. These individuals are not civil servants, thus they can be
called information manager, records manager, and document controller. The life cycle model is still favored by record managers (Flynn, 2010).

Archivist is a support work, thus archivists can handle other jobs outside managing archives. Therefore, coaching and training are essential for them. The term archivist and archive are most commonly used in Indonesia, although non-governmental and private companies tend to use the term documents and records. Recognition for record managers is an appreciation for the job, and it determines the development and improvement all organizations; from a country as the largest organization to the smallest public organization in that country. Archives/records cannot be separated from organizations because archives/records are the byproducts of every action and work activity based on meaningful rules and regulations in an organization (Ketelaar, 2000).

It is about time that the gap between government institutions and independent, individual institutions of record management be eliminated. Institutionalization of record specialist profession in worldwide professional network is the solution. This professional network is related to wealth, technology, and the power to transform the world. This network is a solution for record managers in facing marginalization. Marginalization of record managers in Indonesia is generally resulted from the government’s policies regarding archivist in the government law and regulations. Besides, the fact that record managers in reality do not have any independent forum that covers professional knowledge and control must be accommodated. Resistance and accommodations that are going on between archivists and record managers become the source of gaps, conflicts, marginalization, and helplessness in facing professional demands. Negotiations and consensus happen among record managers.

The manifestation of the construction of reality for these record manager individuals takes a form as an institutionalization of record specialist profession (O’Toole and Cox, 2006). This text aims to depict record specialist institutionalization as a development of record management, from being suppressed by the structure to being a professional institution that is continually developed and independent even in times of tensions, conflicts, and uncertainty, and always get up and hold on to the cultural values believed by the record managers to do their work based on transparency and accountability (Aliza Ismail and Jamludin, 2011). For record managers, social and cultural values avoid them from gaps and help them to be ready to compete in the free market.

Methodology

Institutionalization can be seen through observations on record managers who do their job with implicit knowledge, in the form of cultural values, and explicit knowledge. The observations were done through interviews and FGD to understand the record managers’ perspective in facing and overcoming pressures and uncertainties from their positions in their work organizations. Oftentimes, interviews and FGD were done along with seminars and conferences. There were
five seminars and conferences in total which the writer participated in during this research. Interviews regarding the position and status of record managers in the Indonesian government organizational structures were also done with a Ministry of Administrative and Bureaucratic Reform (KeMenPan) officer.

The results of the interviews, FGDs, and observations divided into two categories: record managers in regulatory system institutions and record managers in individual institutions. Most of them view their jobs as inseparable with ANRI, while others acknowledge the existing efforts to fulfill their wishes. The results of interviewing KeMenPan officer show that record managers do not only argue and count on their institution, but also develop themselves. The officer agreed with me that self-developing will help the institutionalization of record specialist profession.

The results mentioned above were then grouped and categorized into three categories, which are record/archive management institutions and their current challenges, resistance and accommodation of Indonesian archive/record managers, and a process of institutionalization from the micro level of individual institution to the macro level institution in the form of an independent professional association-based certification body, a pure, non-governmental aspiration of the archive/record managers (ANRI).

The category and the information from the respondents collected from more than 200 surveys bring about a possibility of operating institutionalization to fulfill the wishes of some respondents in the interviews and of Indonesian record managers in general. The data is interpreted to understand how record managers view their profession.

Literature Review

The institutionalization of Indonesian record managers bridges the current condition of record managers and the recognized profession; this metaphor overcomes something that covers and shadows their current profession. Profession institutionalization is not an exacerbation of dominant, but an expressed resistance toward identity in the form of a culture aligned with current developments (Ketelaar, 2000). Institutionalization and culture intertwine with one another in forming people's lives. Power and interpretation flow through naming this profession giving the attention paid to identity and representation. Investigation of the flows and connections are performed to generate cultural products. The understanding of the interpretation of profession institutionalization, the creation of identity, and the relation between powers happen through a process of separation and connection between record managers and archivists.

Record managers have had enough being marginalized in organizations. To cope with this situation, they rely to their bodies to survive. So far they define their bodies by their value, greatness, excellence, or even worthlessness. They use metaphors that unify, form, and give meaning to human’s everyday life reality. Record managers also have bodies that have the qualities of power, strength,
vitality, and potential versus weakness, ugliness, and badness. On the other hand, the mind of a record manager is associated with intelligence, bravery, honor, control, balance, and purity versus shallowness, worry, backwardness, sadness, and anxiety. Record managers depict life through metaphors to show opposition. The physical, psychology, and moral quality of a record manager seem to be unevenly distributed in relation with their job level and their individual level of knowledge/skill. The lower the position of them, the less lucky they are. However, above it all there are a number of individuals with charisma (as defined by Max Webber), a constellation of governing strength, grace, beauty, and power.

Although record managers understand that something is missing, that their position is socially and politically unclear, they still cannot grasp how the government has somehow made the uniqueness of their work goes against them (Aliza Ismail dan Jamaludin, 2010). On the other hand, KeMenPan officials do not pay attention nor acknowledge the complaints of record managers regarding their marginality, and the officials cannot do anything about that.

Record managers only follow the people who direct them in seminars and conferences. They think critically in the context of community-based meetings to defy concepts, relying solely on their daily knowledge. Mere daily knowledge is not enough, and it could be replaced with good sense (Gramsci, 1957:90-93). Record managers are conducting structuration in this way.

Structuration is a gradual process of development towards maturity through roles, behaviors, and interactions happening within organizational communities. Process changes on borders and behaviors. Structuration does not result in a perfect reproduction (Ranson, Hinings, & Greenwood, 1980: Coodrick & Salancik,1996). Professional activities that contain politics and jurisdiction are not absolute but are the outcome of the demands and back-demand that is still ongoing because the profession is a community organization. The boundaries of community organizations are constantly being reviewed and subject to redefining and surviving. During this process there is both conflict and structure (D’Aunno, Sutton, and Price, 1991), (Holm,1995), (Davis, Dieckman, and Tinsley,1994), and (Scott, Ruef, Mendel, and Caronna, 2000). The institutionalization process can provide stability. Differences in interpretation and emphasis can be overcome temporarily through negotiable social consensus. The boundaries of the professional and professional community, although implicitly contemplating, are increasingly showing stability during this phase. Practices are reproduced by the professional associations as interactive regulations. In this case, stability should not be misunderstood, because the field here is not static, but it is growing steadily. (Hoffman, 1999: 352: see also Sahlin-Andersson, 1996). The field becomes like a war of institutions (Hoffman, 1999: 352). The field currently should be viewed as a photographed structure that increases the specification and consensus on the logic of the recovery action. (Greenwood, Suddaby, and Hinings, 2002).

An institution is a structure consisting of law, norms, and regulations to maintain stability and to give meaning to social behavior. An institution is
maintained by careers which contain culture, structure, and routines within them. Within institution there are levels (Scott, 1994). Institution becomes a way to think and act, and it is pervasive and permanent. It is manifested in the habits of a group or an individual (Hamilton, 1932: 84). Institutions have distinctive sociocultural characteristics and the day-to-day behavior of their people. The habits that are formed are personal while the routines take place in groups. All of these are components of an institution. Institutions incorporate distinctive patterns of thoughts and actions and they are common to a community such as a company where there are routines, customs, norms, customs, traditions and cultures (Hodgson,1993). In other words, routines are formalized or habits are institutionalized. Institutions can be seen in human activities through the creation and recreation of thoughts and actions that have become habitual. Institutions represent the normative patterns within the community institutions.

The process of record management in organizations happens in a high frequency. Records management builds typical and repetitive patterns of thoughts and actions. In modern offices, record management plays an important role and is the backbone of office routines. Record management is not merely an institutionalized routine in the office; in reality it is also a part of the office structure. Record information is used as a verification and reference for every activity and action in the office, affecting the legal proof of the office/company.

A regular and steady record management, if done with sensitivity, will result in ethical behaviors and recognitions. The beliefs, norms, and values of the record managers breed recognitions, including respect for individuals, as well as sincerity, honesty, and dedication to the task. This culture is already embedded in record managers. Professional certification and institutions are also needed so that the achieved recognitions and the ethical behaviors are maintained (Dearstyen, 2000). People act based on the values that they believed in: right – wrong.

**Discussion**

Recognition from the government and the societies cannot be achieved without the record managers educating them about this profession and make efforts to control through professional association so that their intentions can be recognized by other parties. Recognition takes place in the relationship between two or three parties that are moving within a range of different recognition levels and within the interaction between people. We learn all of our expectations in a relationship. The knowledge about our expectations should always be controlled. In this process, adjustments occur between the tiered recognition and the required control. We can know the intentions of others by having control. In this case, the control is had over the relationship between the government and professional record managers. The effort to control can be done by the professional associations. Thus, an exchange can be done in the relationship between recognition and marginalization.
a. Government Institution-Based Archivist

Archivist is a special functional for civil servants who manage archives in government offices. Archivist functional position is regulated by the Regulation of the Ministry of Administrative and Bureaucratic Reform No. 43 of 2009, which was later updated in 2014 and lastly revised with the intention of increasing the number of archivist through the regulation No. 48 of 2016 about in-passing archivist. The position of an archivist/record manager is considered equivalent to a secretarial and administrative position instead of a profession. An archivist functional position is obtained through coaching and training provided by ANRI. The coaching’s purpose is to inaugurate individuals as archivists and to inaugurate as many of them as possible. It is clearly stated in the Regulation No. 48 of 2016. Archivist inauguration comes from and for ANRI program, Gerakan Nasional Sadar Tertib Arsip (National Movement of Archive Order Awareness): Orderly archive policy; orderly archive organization; orderly archive human resource; orderly means of infrastructure; orderly archive management; orderly archive funding.

Archivist as a functional position has already gained recognition from the government with provisions and protections by the laws and the regulations. However, archivist is professionally marginalized. An archivist’s competence is determined by the government and is limited by the government’s policy. Promotions for archivist are also determined by the requirements set by ANRI. This shows that archivists are instruments to run government institutions; this has actually been the purpose of establishing ANRI since the beginning, which is to support the administration of the Indonesian government.

ANRI is the highest archive institution in a national government level. It guides civil servants to become archivists; manages archives in every government and private institution, and monitors archive managements in every government institution and other institutions in the Republic of Indonesia. Archive monitoring by ANRI in a non-government and private institutions focuses on archive physical management, not on the behavior of the archive/record managers. Archive/record managers are managed by KeMenPan which put archivist as supporters of the activities of government organizations in functional, not structural, areas. A functional position does not have the authority to make policies. The field of Indonesian archivist is static, controlled by the government through government regulations. Archivist becomes an instrument to run the national government instead of a professional who works as an agent and runs an agency through their profession.

Archivists born from coaching and trainings are incompatible with the qualified competent professional. Archive coaching activity consists of (1). Coordination of archiving implementation, (2). Guidance, supervision, and consultation regarding archiving implementation, (3). Archival socialization, (4). Archival education and training, (5). Planning, monitoring, and evaluation. This circumstance create a gap between archive managers in non-government/private
organizations and those who work for the government but are not a civil servant. Most archive managers graduate from a formal archival major, and since they cannot be called as an archivist, they are called as a record manager or a document controller instead. Archive/record managers have different abilities or competencies in doing their work. Different competencies are related to recognition in the midst of a free market that prioritizes locally, regionally, and globally recognized professional competencies.

The development of the global market, which is especially in the grip of the neo-capitalists, inevitably needs to be a concern and caution of the record managers when positioning themselves in the ongoing battle of strategies. Record managers are currently expanding globally, thus they cannot be separated from the international networks with the existing access to ICT and with informed societies demanding values of openness and transparency from record organizations and managers. Currently, ISO 15489 grounds for the condition of the professional service and products. On the other hand, the levels of record managements professions are determined based on the internationally standardized competences under the control of International Certification in Management Record to fulfill the market’s demands and needs, and certainly is adjusted with the professional association authorities referring to the national legislations. This paper underlines the historical reality of the organization's view of record managers in Indonesia. The emphasis on history and time leads this paper to the process of change and the arising consequences.

Record managers do their job according to their work instructions, and they interact with one another to operationalize their believed culture. Different perspectives exist among record managers, as some resign to accept the uncertainty of the existence of archivist while some others keep on demanding clarity of their position as a non-archivist. They all feel hopeless to do anything about it and they do not understand the root of the problems. A record manager actually said, “An individual against the whole government, really?” Record managers’ concerns arise from the issue of recognition and respect for belief and identity. Record management is an institution just like the individual manager. The reaction of the institutional individual is the result of feeling threatened that their institution will be eliminated. They survive through empowering themselves against the attacks from fellow service managers and users.

b. Record Managers Understanding about Themselves and the Societies.

Recognition of record managers is an appreciation of their works which determine the development and the improvement of all organizations, from a country as the biggest organization to the smallest public organization within that country. Archives/records cannot be separated from organizations because archives/records are the byproducts of every action and work activity based on meaningful rules and regulations in an organization (Dollar, 1993). The lack and absence of record managers in an organization cause social, cultural, economic,
and financial loss for an organization – especially today’s modern organizations. The meaningful act and work of record management cannot be separated from the meaning of archive/record owners and organizers in an organization – the belief, regulation, value, and knowledge of record and record management. Unlike secretaries or administrators, record managers preserve cultural products, cultural expression products, and the values and identity of an organization. Knowledge and skill can be gained from formal school and college level education institutions. This raises record managers' awareness that their work is a profession understood as the aggregate of individual structures (O'Toole and Cox, 2006: 73 – 81). Record manager individuals unconsciously see themselves as agents of change who face the archivist structure that is not on their side. Record managers with high sense of responsibility and self-respect/appreciation always have to choose between cost and benefits in doing their every job. Their behavior always reflects calculation of every act they will take or are taking, based on the principle of optimum benefit. The indications are shown through their facial expressions, gestures, and words.

A record specialist is an individual who manage the records of their organizations as well as the government and private organizations. Record specialists in conferences and seminars meet and discuss their position in the government institutions with regulators. They discuss or complaint about the government who seems to refuse to acknowledge record managers even though record managers to organizations these days are likely as tires to a vehicle. This problem must be overcome so that they will always hold on to their commitments and ready to face any burdens that could come any time, threatening Indonesian record managers’ reliability in handling their jobs.

Individuals accept and follow norms without questioning and without any reflections nor resistances shown in their behavior. However, their resistances are channeled using and through their own bodies by saying, “Well, it’s good, isn’t it…” Other individuals say with a hopeless expression, “Well, it is what it is…” while pouting their lips. Others remain silent but put forth a smile-free, deep-in-thought expression. These two categories are not opposite to each other, but both represent two endpoints of a continual decision-making and behavior process. Similar behaviors are carefully described and detailed to show the conditions underlying the appearance of similar behaviors. This behavior shows similarities at one endpoint of the continuum.

Rationality, in this case, is seen as something flexible and not rigid. Record managers state that they have acted according to their position and work professionally. The profession is required to be able to provide a complex knowledge so that its services can be used by people who do not possess such specialized knowledge. Record management profession is important and has power in the society now. The importance of the profession is built by the members of the profession who, through education and work experience, possess special knowledge which is not owned by members of the society. Professionals become powerful because they master their knowledge and can control the use of
that knowledge at the different levels (Brien, 1998). The society depends on and is easily convinced by the actions taken by the professionals who are members of the profession.

Record management gives meaning to explain and regulate relations, and to contribute to a greater stability within an organization or between the organization members. Just like accounting management (Baldvinsdottir, 2001, 2009; Nørreklit et al., 2006), record management is able to create facts to negotiate and to gain recognition from others because it enhances their actions, and trust. No one questions the result of accounting calculations. This has also been going on for record managers.

c. Institutionalization of Record Specialist in Indonesia

Institutionalization of record specialist profession greatly depends on the professional association. Networks are the source of and for cultural values that establish the profession of record management. Professional association is an agent that regulates as an important regulator. Professional associations can legitimize changes by guiding discourse processes that make changes discussed and supported. First, they negotiate and manage the debate within the profession. Second, by framing a professional identity to be presented to other professions, this discourse allows the professional identity to be re-established (Dearstyne, 2000).

A profession is an association of record managers. Institutionalization is the process of realizing the values, norms, beliefs, rules, and knowledge possessed by individual record managers and then transferred into the embodiment of institutions within the macro-institutional level. Record managers are agents the working class who are actively shaping themselves: they organize productive and social formation movements. With a charisma, record managers do an agency, which is the power of people to build a history. Record managers execute structuration, keep moving and move themselves to make changes in themselves and in the hegemony. This structuration is opposite to the structure but they interact with one another. This movement is not only related with the economic relations but also with the social and cultural issues. Some of the values possessed by the record manager individuals are: respect, pride, responsibility, tepo sliro (tolerance).

Record management requires not only formal education background, but also work experiences. This work involves collecting, storing, and preserving information in various formats as well as providing information through services. Currently, with the rapid technology development, record managers make, recognize, and save documents in printed and electronic forms.

The work of record managers contains historicity from the creation to the valuation, and applies the historical methods in storing records. Record managers believe that knowledge and trainings are the requirements of being a record management professional, or usually called as record specialist. Record specialist
must possess strong knowledge of archive/record administration theories, principles, and practices. The understanding can be gained from formal and informal trainings. However, record specialist professional development does not always require formal and informal trainings. Trainings are the foundation of professional development while skills are honed, and knowledge solidified through experiences.

Institutionalization happen through an independent association that communicates with the governments and individuals, and accepts, operates, channels, monitors, and revises the values, rules, and regulations; all of these are done in the form of regulations, standard operating procedures, framework of competence, sanctions, and payments. The more confident a profession, the more recognition it gets. If we are trustworthy in our relation with other individuals, and we fully realize the consequences of our every action, recognition slowly becomes our habit. The same principle applies for showing our appreciation to others in our daily lives; we are encouraging others to appreciate us. Enforcement through daily behavior between professionals in the same area and with those from other areas results in recognition going on all the time, and other parties will recognize it, too. When an individual act confidently based on their knowledge and behave appreciatively, the society will appreciate it. When an individual feel recognized, they will try to show that they are worthy of the recognition. We contribute in improving the culture by giving recognition of other professions and beliefs to each other.

Shaping individuals is necessary when entering the labor market where we compete based on formal education and professional learning. Professionalism determines career development in conformation with the neo-liberal model. Neo-liberal country models and governance patterns are exported to Indonesia through programs that are appropriate to the international structures and multilevel training schemes.

Professional certification of record specialist becomes the bridge between record specialists, record management associations, the government, and market demands. This institution improves the condition of archivists, document controllers, and record managers amid the rules and regulations in Indonesia. Legitimacy from the government to professional and independent record specialist profession as a professional institution closes the gap between archivists, document controllers, and record specialist. This record specialist professional institution is hybrid; it is a combination of archivist and document controller’s competences.

Despite various names labeled to them, record specialist changes/determines the life of the people and the environment in and around any organizations in the world. The variety of names is the result of various styles of organizations, and how the government and the actors respond to this type of work. Almost all governments initially see record management as the same as and part of secretariats. Since the beginning of human civilization, a number of governments admit that this type of work is important in supporting the
government operations, thus placing this job in the category of unique specialty and skill. Most Indonesian societies and government see record, both its contents and its physical being, as the “leftover” of organizations. The society's view of the profession cannot be separated from the understanding of the connection between people and the results of the activities of those who transcend borders and boundaries (Richardson, 2017).

The institutionalization of record specialist, which is a hybrid profession, in Indonesia comes from the aspirations of the many record managers in Indonesia through independent professional associations. Record specialist as an institution in global organizations that rely on organizational transparency and accountability cannot be separated from record managers with the global institutions too – not only with the government institutions and others. The institutional theory of the individual is placed on the institution of record management regulatory system. The institutionalization of record specialist profession is an attempt to conceptualize and demonstrate the elements that exist in the process to drive innovation from before the profession is institutionalized toward full institutionalization. Practices are institutionalized or un-institutionalized. Archive managers follow the expanded institutional script. The change from the archive management profession that has not been instantiated into an institutional one requires a model. The model directs the transition from theoretical formulation to social movement and then to institutional imperative (Strang and Meyer, 1993: 495). This transition is accomplished by languishing and following new ideas in prevailing normative prescriptions, giving them moral legitimacy (Suchman, 1995: see also Tolbert & Zucker, 1996: 183), and or by incorporating functional superiority or pragmatic legitimacy (Suchman, 1995).

The widespread innovation is objectified and gets consensus based on pragmatic value judgments (Suchman, 1995). The longer innovations spread, the wider it spreads (Tolbert and Zucker, 1996: 183). Full institutionalization is accomplished when adoption breeds ideas with legitimacy support (Suchman, 1995). Ideas are accepted as they are; a natural and appropriate arrangements. Ideas can last long when passed down from generation to generation if it is fully institutionalized, accepted as a behavior worthy to be conducted without criticism (Tolbert & Zucker, 1996: 184). Institutionalization involves and includes its own profession, the market, other professions and positions, and the government, so that legalized distinctiveness can be achieved.

Conclusion

The institutionalization of record specialist profession is not only a metaphor but an investigation between what is real and what is imagined. The result of separation and connection of the views of the members of the society takes the resistance and accommodation to the archivist association with the formal institution and the imaginary profession of record specialist. The imagination of institutionalizing record management profession is socialized in
forums and meetings. There are social and cultural relations formed through this process. This process breeds consensuses and negotiations regarding the formal institution of record specialist profession. Record specialist is a profession carried out by citizens responsibly and sovereignty to and for the country, while record specialist individuals are the agents that continue to improve themselves under the regulator of independent associations. Recognition of independent record specialist profession takes place in non-territorial boundary. The interconnection between various and diasporic cultures and a record specialist’s way of life flow within the institutionalization of the profession.

References