



The Relevance of Library and Information Science Graduates' Competencies to Non-Linear Careers: A Phenomenological Study of Graduates from the State Islamic University of North Sumatra

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ABSTRACT

The phenomenon of non-linear careers is increasingly observed among university graduates, including Library and Information Science graduates who pursue careers outside the librarianship profession. This study aims to examine the relevance of Library and Information Science graduates' competencies to the non-linear career paths they undertake. A qualitative approach employing a phenomenological method was used in this research. The participants consisted of seven graduates from the Library and Information Science Study Program at the State Islamic University of North Sumatra, Class of 2017, who are currently employed in various non-library sectors. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation, and were analyzed using the Miles, Huberman, and Saldana model. The findings reveal that the competencies acquired by Library and Information Science graduates possess a transferable nature, enabling their application across diverse occupational fields. The most frequently utilized competencies include information management, records management, communication, information technology, and managerial skills. The study also found that graduates were able to develop adaptive career identities through continuous learning and adjustment to new work environments. Furthermore, success in non-linear career trajectories is influenced not only by the competencies gained during higher education but also by individuals' capacity for self-directed learning after entering the workforce. These findings suggest that the relevance of graduate competencies is not solely determined by the alignment between academic discipline and occupation, but also by the ability to transform and apply acquired competencies across a variety of professional contexts.

KATA KUNCI

Kompetensi Graduates
Transferable Skill
Career Adaptability
Karier Non-Linear
Ilmu Perpustakaan

ABSTRAK

Fenomena karier non-linear semakin banyak ditemukan pada lulusan perguruan tinggi, termasuk graduates Program Studi Ilmu Perpustakaan yang bekerja di luar bidang kepustakawanan. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis relevansi kompetensi graduates Ilmu Perpustakaan terhadap karier non-linear yang dijalani. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode fenomenologi. Informan penelitian terdiri atas tujuh graduates Program Studi Ilmu Perpustakaan Universitas Islam Negeri Sumatera Utara angkatan 2017 yang bekerja pada berbagai sektor non-kepustakawanan. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam, observasi, dan dokumentasi, kemudian dianalisis menggunakan model Miles, Huberman, dan Saldana. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kompetensi graduates Ilmu Perpustakaan memiliki karakter transferable



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yang memungkinkan penerapannya pada berbagai bidang pekerjaan. Kompetensi yang paling banyak dimanfaatkan meliputi pengelolaan informasi, pengarsipan, komunikasi, teknologi informasi, dan manajemen. Penelitian ini juga menemukan bahwa graduates mampu membangun identitas karier yang adaptif melalui proses pembelajaran dan penyesuaian terhadap lingkungan kerja baru. Selain itu, keberhasilan dalam karier non-linear tidak hanya dipengaruhi oleh kompetensi yang diperoleh selama perkuliahan, tetapi juga oleh kemampuan belajar mandiri setelah memasuki dunia kerja. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa relevansi kompetensi lulusan tidak semata-mata ditentukan oleh kesesuaian antara bidang studi dan pekerjaan, tetapi oleh kemampuan mentransformasikan kompetensi yang dimiliki ke dalam berbagai konteks profesional.

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1. Introduction

Globalization and digital disruption have brought significant changes to the structure and dynamics of the world of work (Prasektianto, 2025). Technological transformation, automation, and the digitalization of information have not only changed the types of jobs available but also the competencies required of the workforce (Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, dan Teknologi, 2020). Today, the labor market is no longer entirely oriented toward a linear alignment between educational background and occupational field. Instead, it requires university graduates to possess adaptive and flexible capabilities, as well as cross-disciplinary skills. (Anwar & Zahra, 2024). This condition places higher education in a strategic position to prepare human resources who are not only academically competent but also capable of responding to the increasingly dynamic demands of the labor market (Imamudin, 2015).

These changes have also influenced the career patterns of university graduates. From the perspective of Boundaryless Career Theory, modern careers are no longer constrained by specific professions, organizations, or academic disciplines. Instead, they allow individuals to move across and develop within different employment sectors based on the competencies they possess. (Michael Bernard Arthur & Denise M. Rousseau, 2001). Hall (2004) The concept of the Protean Career also explains that individuals increasingly have the freedom to determine their career direction based on their adaptability, interests, and available opportunities. This phenomenon has given rise to various forms of non-linear careers, which are career paths that are not always directly related to an individual's formal educational background.

In the context of the Library and Information Science Study Program, graduates are normatively prepared to work in the fields of librarianship, documentation, and information management. The competencies taught generally include collection management, library material processing, information services, and library management (Menteri Ketenagakerjaan, 2025). Unlike several disciplines that are oriented toward specific professions, the competencies of Library and Information Science graduates possess a relatively transferable character because they are centered on information management as a primary resource in various organizations. Therefore, the competencies possessed by graduates are not only relevant to library environments but also have the potential to be applied across various employment sectors that require skills in information management, administration, communication, and digital technology.

This transferable character provides Library and Information Science graduates with opportunities to pursue careers in various fields beyond the librarianship sector. Graduates can be found working in administration, business, digital marketing, public services, creative industries, education, and other service sectors. Anwar & Zahra (2024) found that the digital competencies and information management skills acquired during education have a relatively high relevance to the demands of the contemporary labor market. Therefore, the relevance of graduate competencies is no longer measured solely by the linear alignment between the field of

study and employment, but also by graduates' ability to transform their competencies into various occupational contexts.

This phenomenon is also evident among graduates of the Library and Information Science Study Program at the State Islamic University of North Sumatra. Based on graduates tracer study data, of the 109 graduates from the Class of 2017, 34 individuals, or approximately 31.19%, were employed in fields that were not directly related to librarianship. This percentage indicates that nearly one-third of the graduates have pursued non-linear career paths. This condition suggests that the phenomenon of non-linear careers is no longer an individual case, but rather part of the dynamic relationship between higher education and the changing demands of the labor market. Compared to graduates from previous cohorts, who tended to work in fields more closely aligned with Library and Information Science, the Class of 2017 graduates demonstrate greater career diversity, making them a representative group for examining this phenomenon.

In addition to being influenced by changes in the structure of the labor market, graduates decisions to pursue non-linear careers are also shaped by various personal and social factors. Social Cognitive Career Theory explains that individuals' career choices are influenced by the interaction of learning experiences, self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and environmental factors that support or constrain career choices. (Lent et al., 1994). In the context of Library and Information Science graduates, factors such as broader employment opportunities, economic needs, personal interests, career development, and social environmental demands may serve as considerations in determining the career paths they pursue. Therefore, graduates success in pursuing non-linear careers is determined not only by their academic competencies but also by their ability to adapt to changing conditions and job demands (Putri et al., 2024).

Academically, research on Library and Information Science graduates has generally focused on curriculum relevance, librarians' professional competencies, work readiness, and the mastery of soft skills within employment contexts that are linearly related to the field of librarianship. Studies that specifically examine how Library and Information Science graduates utilize their competencies when working in non-librarianship fields remain relatively limited. In addition, studies exploring graduates experiences in transforming their academic competencies into different occupational contexts are still scarce. Therefore, a research gap remains regarding the relevance of Library and Information Science graduates competencies in non-linear careers, which warrants further investigation.

To gain a deeper understanding of this phenomenon, this study employs Career Adaptability Theory proposed by Savickas (2013). This theory explains that an individual's ability to cope with career changes is influenced by four main dimensions: concern, control, curiosity, and confidence. These four dimensions enable individuals to prepare for their future careers, make decisions, explore new opportunities, and develop confidence in facing workplace challenges. In the context of this study, the theory is used to analyze how Library and Information Science graduates adapt the competencies acquired during their studies when pursuing non-linear careers.

Based on the foregoing discussion, this study aims to analyze the relevance of the competencies of the 2017 graduates of the Library and Information Science Study Program at the State Islamic University of North Sumatra to the non-linear careers they pursue, as well as to understand the factors influencing those career choices. The findings of this study are expected to contribute theoretically to the development of studies on graduate competencies and career adaptability among Library and Information Science graduates, as well as to provide practical input for the development of a curriculum that is more adaptive to the demands of the contemporary labor market.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Career Adaptability Theory

Career Adaptability Theory is one of the central concepts within Career Construction Theory developed by Mark L. Savickas. This theory explains an individual's ability to prepare for, adapt to, and respond to various changes, transitions, and challenges that occur throughout career development. (M. Savickas, 2013). In an increasingly dynamic labor market, individuals can no

longer rely on a single fixed career path. Instead, they are required to possess the ability to adapt to changing job demands, technological developments, and evolving career opportunities.

According to [Savickas \(2013\)](#), career adaptability consists of four main dimensions known as the 4Cs: concern, control, curiosity, and confidence. Concern refers to an individual's ability to prepare for and think about their future career. Control is related to the ability to make decisions and manage the direction of one's chosen career. Curiosity refers to an individual's desire to explore various career possibilities and employment opportunities. Meanwhile, confidence reflects an individual's belief in their ability to face challenges and resolve various problems that arise throughout their career journey.

In the context of non-linear careers, career adaptability is a relevant concept because it enables individuals to transform their competencies across different occupational fields. Individuals with a high level of career adaptability tend to be better able to cope with changes in the labor market and take advantage of career opportunities beyond their formal educational background.

2.2. Concept of Competence

Competence is a combination of knowledge, skills, and attitudes that enables an individual to perform work effectively and achieve the expected level of performance. ([Spencer & Spencer, 2008](#)). Competence encompasses not only technical abilities specific to a particular profession but also general capabilities that can be applied across various occupational contexts.

In the development of human resource studies, the concept of transferable skills has emerged, referring to skills that can be used and applied across different fields of employment. ([Bridgstock, 2009](#)). Competencies such as communication, digital literacy, problem-solving, teamwork, information management, and lifelong learning are forms of transferable skills that are increasingly needed in the modern labor market.

In the field of Library and Information Science, graduate competencies encompass not only collection management and library services but also information management, knowledge organization, information literacy, information technology, and information communication. These characteristics make the competencies of Library and Information Science graduates cross-sectoral in nature and potentially applicable to various fields of employment beyond librarianship.

2.3. Competency Based Curriculum

A competency-based curriculum is an educational approach oriented toward the learning outcomes that graduates are expected to achieve upon completing their education. This approach emphasizes the mastery of competencies that are relevant to the demands of the labor market and societal development ([Mulder, 2017](#)).

In Library and Information Science education, the curriculum generally includes competencies in information management, knowledge organization, information services, library management, information literacy, and information technology. However, the increasingly dynamic labor market requires curricula not only to produce graduates who are technically competent but also to equip them with soft skills such as communication, collaboration, creativity, critical thinking, and the ability to adapt to change.

Thus, the success of a curriculum is measured not only by graduates' ability to work in the field of librarianship but also by their ability to apply their competencies across various occupational contexts ([Handajani et al., 2020](#)).

2.4. Career Non-Linear Careers from the Boundaryless Career Perspective

The development of the modern labor market has given rise to various career patterns that no longer follow traditional linear pathways. [Arthur and Rousseau \(2001\)](#) introduced the concept of the boundaryless career, which describes a career as a process that can develop across organizational, professional, and disciplinary boundaries. Individuals are no longer bound to a single profession throughout their lives, but can move and develop according to the opportunities, competencies, and needs they possess.

Through the concept of the protean career, [Hall \(2004\)](#) explains that individuals increasingly play an active role in determining their career direction based on their values, interests, and adaptive

capabilities. In this context, a non-linear career can be understood as a career path that does not always have a direct relationship with an individual's formal educational background, yet still enables individuals to utilize their competencies to achieve career success.

This phenomenon is increasingly found among university graduates who work outside their field of study, including Library and Information Science graduates employed in administration, business, information technology, education, and various other sectors.

3. Research Methodology

This study employed a qualitative approach with a phenomenological method to understand the lived experiences of the 2017 graduates of the Library and Information Science Study Program at the State Islamic University of North Sumatra who work in non-linear career fields. The phenomenological approach was used to explore the meaning of individuals' experiences in interpreting the competencies acquired during their studies and their application in careers that are not directly related to the field of librarianship (Creswell & Poth, 2017).

The research participants consisted of graduates of the Library and Information Science Study Program, Class of 2017, who work outside the field of librarianship. Informants were selected purposively based on their relevance to the research objectives, namely graduates who had experience working in non-linear career fields and were willing to provide in-depth information.

Data were collected through in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation. Subsequently, the data were analyzed using the interactive analysis model developed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2013) model consists of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. To ensure data credibility, this study employed source triangulation, method triangulation, and member checking with the informants to ensure that the interpretation of the findings was consistent with their lived experiences (Moleong, 2018).

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Overview of Informants

This study involved seven graduates of the Library and Information Science Study Program who work in non-linear career fields, namely occupations that are not directly related to the field of librarianship. The informants were selected based on the criteria of having worked for at least six months after graduation and being willing to provide in-depth information regarding their career experiences.

Table 1. Characteristics of the Research Informants

No	Informant Code	Employment Sector	Length of Employment
1	Informant 1	Entrepreneur	5 years
2	Informant 2	Administrative Staff, Tri Logistics Depot (Indosat), Panyabungan	3 years
3	Informant 3	Financial Administrator	2 years
4	Informant 4	Channel Business Development	6 months
5	Informant 5	Aviation Institution Staff	3 years
6	Informant 6	Entrepreneur	1 year
7	Informant 7	Teacher	5 years

Table 1 shows that the research informants were employed in various non-librarianship sectors, including administration, business, services, education, and entrepreneurship. This diversity of employment sectors provides a broader picture of how the competencies acquired through Library and Information Science education are applied in different work contexts. The variation in

the informants' work experiences also enabled the researcher to identify patterns of career adaptation and diverse forms of competency utilization in non-linear careers.

4.2. Transferable Competencies: The Transformation of Library and Information Science Competencies in Non-Linear Careers

The findings indicate that the competencies acquired during education in the Library and Information Science Study Program remain relevant across the various occupations pursued by graduates, even though these occupations are not directly related to the field of librarianship. However, these competencies are not utilized in the same form as when they are applied in library environments; rather, they undergo a process of transformation according to the characteristics and requirements of each occupation. This finding suggests that the competencies of Library and Information Science graduates possess a transferable nature, meaning that they can be transferred and applied across different occupational contexts.

In the administrative sector, competencies related to information management, document organization, data classification, and information retrieval emerged as the most frequently utilized skills. [Rizqy Fadhillah](#) (I2), who works as a Logistics Depot Administrator at Tri (Indosat), explained that the classification and data analysis skills acquired during university studies continue to be applied in his current professional activities. The informant noted that competencies such as collection management, bibliographic classification, data analysis, and information literacy remain relevant to his work. When asked about the competencies most frequently used, he specifically highlighted classification and data analysis. These findings indicate that the principles of information organization learned in LIS education continue to provide practical value in managing organizational data and documents within administrative environments.

A similar pattern was observed in the experience of [Aulia Mafriza](#) (I3), who works as a Financial Administrator. The informant explained that competencies related to information management and retrieval are among the most frequently applied in her daily work. According to her, an understanding of information retrieval systems facilitates the process of locating documents and data required for financial administrative activities. She stated that "information retrieval systems help make documents and information easier to locate." This experience demonstrates that the concept of information retrieval, traditionally associated with library services, is also highly relevant to broader organizational information management practices. Therefore, competencies developed through LIS education not only function within library settings but also contribute to workplace effectiveness in administrative and financial sectors.

Within the business sector, the competencies utilized exhibit different characteristics. [Khairul Yoga Pratama](#) (I4), who works as a Channel Business Development Officer, revealed that the competencies most frequently applied are no longer technical library-related skills but rather computer literacy, communication, and management skills. The informant explained that the knowledge and experiences gained during university studies provided important capital for entering the business world. In his view, communication abilities, technological proficiency, and managerial understanding remain essential competencies in his current occupation. This finding suggests that competencies acquired through formal education are not always applied directly but are transformed into broader professional skills that support success in different work environments.

An interesting finding also emerged from the informant employed in the aviation services sector. [Wahyu Gunanda](#) (I5) explained that archival management competencies are among the most relevant skills in his current position, as a significant portion of his work involves managing organizational documents. Nevertheless, he acknowledged that his understanding of records management developed further after entering the workforce. He noted that archival work had previously been understood merely as organizing and storing documents, whereas professional practice requires adherence to specific procedures and standards. This experience indicates that some competencies acquired during university studies serve as foundational knowledge that is subsequently strengthened through professional experience and continuous learning.

In the educational sector, competencies related to information literacy and communication emerged as the most prominent. [Jenny Fransiska Gultom](#) (I7), who works as a teacher, revealed

that the experience of searching for, evaluating, organizing, and communicating information acquired during her university studies has assisted her in carrying out her responsibilities as an educator. Furthermore, experiences involving presentations and academic communication during higher education provided useful preparation for delivering instructional materials to students. These findings suggest that information literacy competencies, which constitute a fundamental component of LIS education, are not only relevant within library settings but also hold significant value in educational professions focused on knowledge management and dissemination.

Beyond technical competencies, the findings indicate that soft skills are among the most frequently utilized competencies in non-linear careers. [Farhan Yudi](#) (I1), who works as an entrepreneur, emphasized the importance of accuracy, communication skills, time management, and organizational abilities in managing his business activities. According to the informant, these skills contribute not only to business operations but also to building relationships with customers. This finding demonstrates that LIS education contributes not only to the development of technical competencies but also to the cultivation of professional skills applicable across a wide range of occupational contexts, including entrepreneurship.

Nevertheless, the perceived relevance of competencies was not experienced uniformly across all participants. [Muwallis Ikhsan](#) (I6), who also works as an entrepreneur, stated that many of the skills learned during university studies are not extensively utilized in his current occupation because the nature of his work differs substantially from the library field. However, he acknowledged that archival management skills continue to provide practical benefits in managing his business operations. This finding represents a negative case, demonstrating that the relevance of competencies is not universal across all types of employment. The extent to which competencies are utilized appears to be influenced by the characteristics of the occupation and its degree of proximity to information management activities.

Overall, the findings indicate that the relevance of LIS graduates' competencies to non-linear careers does not primarily lie in the direct application of technical library skills. Rather, it resides in graduates' ability to transform and adapt these competencies to different professional contexts. The competencies most readily transferred include information management, classification, information retrieval, records management, information technology, communication, management, and attention to detail. These findings support [Bridgstock's \(2009\)](#) argument that transferable skills constitute a critical factor enabling university graduates to adapt and succeed across diverse employment sectors. At the same time, this study demonstrates that such success is not determined solely by competencies acquired through formal education but is also shaped by continuous learning processes and professional experiences gained after entering the workforce.

4.3. Adaptive Career Identity: The Development of Professional Identity Beyond the Field of Librarianship

The findings indicate that Library and Information Science graduates not only adapt to new work environments but also undergo a process of developing professional identities that differ from the career orientations they envisioned during their studies. Most informants acknowledged that their current occupations do not align with their initial expectations when choosing the Library and Information Science Study Program. Nevertheless, this condition is not perceived as career failure, but rather as part of the process of adapting to the opportunities and demands of an ever-changing labor market.

The process of developing career identity is reflected in the informants' ability to accept and interpret occupations outside the field of librarianship as new opportunities to develop their competencies. Several informants revealed that they initially experienced uncertainty when entering occupations that differed from their educational background. However, over time, they began to identify connections between the competencies acquired during their studies and the demands of their work. This condition indicates that the professional identity of graduates is no longer constructed based on the alignment between academic major and occupation, but rather on the ability to utilize their competencies across various work contexts.

[Khairul Yoga Pratama](#) (I4) explained that the learning experiences gained during his studies provided a foundation that helped him enter the business sector, which he had never initially considered as a primary career choice. The informant stated that the communication skills, managerial abilities, and technological competencies acquired during his studies became important assets in building a career in business development. This experience indicates that the professional identity that emerged was not entirely detached from his educational background, but rather underwent a transformation in accordance with the demands of his occupation.

Similar findings were observed among informants working as entrepreneurs. [Muwallis Ikhsan](#) (I6) acknowledged that most of the work he currently performs differs from the material studied during his university education. Nevertheless, he realized that several competencies previously perceived as less relevant had proven beneficial in managing his business. This experience reflects a shift in perspective toward the education he had received. Competencies that were initially perceived as library-specific skills were subsequently reinterpreted as abilities that could support professional activities beyond the field of librarianship.

In addition, several informants demonstrated a tendency to continue learning and developing new skills after entering the workforce. They did not rely solely on the competencies acquired during their studies, but also actively learned new skills required in their occupations. This condition indicates that the professional identity of graduates is shaped through a combination of academic competencies and continuous learning processes. In other words, their success in pursuing non-linear careers is determined not only by formal education but also by their ability to continuously adapt and develop themselves.

From the perspective of Career Adaptability Theory, these findings reflect the four dimensions of career adaptability proposed by [Savickas \(2013\)](#). The dimension of concern is evident in the informants' awareness of preparing for their future careers by seeking broader employment opportunities. The dimension of control is reflected in their willingness to make decisions to work in fields that differ from their educational background. The dimension of curiosity is demonstrated through their willingness to learn new skills and knowledge in response to job demands. Meanwhile, the dimension of confidence is evident in the informants' belief in their ability to face challenges and perform occupations that were previously outside their area of expertise.

Interestingly, the findings indicate that the process of career adaptation experienced by the informants did not always occur smoothly. Some informants reported difficulties during the early stages of employment because they had to learn new work environments, professional terminology, and skills that differed from those acquired during their studies. However, these experiences became an important part of the development of their professional identities. Through this process, the graduates not only learned how to perform new occupations but also developed the confidence that their educational background in Library and Information Science continued to hold value across various fields of employment.

Overall, these findings indicate that non-linear careers do not merely represent a transition between occupational fields, but also a process of developing an adaptive professional identity. Library and Information Science graduates do not abandon their academic identity when entering non-librarianship occupations; rather, they transform that identity into a resource that helps them adapt, learn, and develop across various work contexts. These findings support [Savickas's \(2013\)](#) view that the ability to adapt to career changes is an important factor that enables individuals to sustain their careers amid the dynamics of the modern labor market.

4.4. Curriculum Mismatch and Self-Learning: Between Curriculum Relevance and the Demands of the Labor Market

Although the findings indicate that most of the competencies acquired during higher education remain relevant to the occupations pursued by graduates, the study also reveals a gap between the competencies taught in the curriculum and the demands of the labor market encountered by graduates after completing their studies. This gap does not necessarily imply that the curriculum failed to prepare graduates; rather, it suggests that changes in the labor market occur more rapidly than the curriculum's ability to accommodate all emerging competency demands in practice.

Several informants acknowledged that the foundational competencies acquired during their studies provided important support for their work. However, they also explained that many skills had to be relearned after entering the workforce. This condition was particularly evident among informants working in the business, entrepreneurship, and service sectors, where competency demands differ from the technical librarianship competencies acquired during their studies.

[Khairul Yoga Pratama](#) (I4), who works in business development, explained that his university education provided a foundational set of competencies, including communication skills, managerial abilities, and technological proficiency. However, in order to sustain and advance his career, he still had to learn various new skills that were not specifically acquired during his studies. Similar findings were observed among informants working as entrepreneurs. [Muwallis Ikhsan](#) (I6) revealed that most of the business activities he currently undertakes differ from the material studied during his university education, requiring him to acquire many new skills through direct practical experience.

These findings indicate that graduates success in pursuing non-linear careers is not determined solely by the academic competencies acquired through formal education. Rather, such success is also influenced by the ability to engage in self-directed learning, the willingness to develop new skills, and the capacity to adapt to continuously changing job demands. In other words, the competencies acquired during higher education serve as an initial foundation, while continuous learning becomes the factor that enables graduates to sustain and advance their careers in different work environments.

Interestingly, several informants only began to recognize the relevance of the knowledge acquired during their studies after entering the workforce. Competencies such as records management, information management, and document organization, which were previously perceived as library-specific competencies, were found to be useful in various professional activities. Nevertheless, the informants also noted that today's labor market demands a broader range of additional competencies, including professional communication skills, advanced digital literacy, digital marketing, data analysis, and networking skills.

These findings indicate that curriculum relevance cannot be measured solely by the degree of alignment between a study program and the occupations pursued by its graduates. Curriculum relevance must also be assessed based on its ability to develop mindsets, foundational skills, and learning capacities that enable graduates to adapt to changes in the labor market. In this context, the Library and Information Science curriculum has succeeded in developing foundational competencies that can be transferred across various fields of employment. However, the findings also indicate the need to strengthen competencies that are more adaptive to labor market developments, particularly in the areas of digital literacy, professional communication, entrepreneurship, business management, and problem-solving.

These findings are consistent with [Bridgstock's \(2009\)](#) view that graduate employability is determined not only by mastery of disciplinary competencies but also by the ability to manage one's career and continuously develop new competencies throughout professional life. Therefore, the success of Library and Information Science graduates in non-linear careers cannot be understood solely as an outcome of the curriculum, but rather as the result of the interaction between the academic competencies acquired during their studies and the capacity for self-directed learning that continues to develop after entering the workforce.

Overall, this study demonstrates that the relationship between the curriculum and the labor market is dynamic. The curriculum provides an important foundation of competencies, but it is not always able to anticipate all competency demands that emerge across different employment sectors. Therefore, the development of the Library and Information Science curriculum should be directed not only toward strengthening technical librarianship competencies but also toward enhancing transferable skills and lifelong learning capabilities that enable graduates to navigate various possible career paths in the future.

5. Conclusion

This study demonstrates that the competencies acquired by graduates of the Library and Information Science Study Program at the State Islamic University of North Sumatra remain

relevant to the non-linear careers they pursue. This relevance lies not in the direct application of technical librarianship competencies, but in the graduates's ability to transform competencies such as information management, records management, communication, information technology, and management into various occupational contexts. These findings indicate that the competencies of Library and Information Science graduates possess a transferable character that enables their application across various employment sectors beyond the field of librarianship.

This study also found that graduates success in pursuing non-linear careers is influenced by their ability to develop an adaptive career identity and their willingness to continue learning after entering the workforce. Although the curriculum provides an important foundation of competencies, some of the skills required in employment are acquired through self-directed learning and professional experience. Therefore, the development of the Library and Information Science curriculum should be directed toward strengthening transferable skills, digital literacy, professional communication, and lifelong learning capabilities to better prepare graduates for the continuously changing dynamics of the labor market.

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Authors' Contributions

Nurul Ilmiyah: creating an initial draft, defining the study's objectives and goals, collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data, and revising the manuscript. **Abdul Karim Batubara:** supervision.

Conflict of Interests

We declare that there are no situations that could compromise the independence and objectivity of the execution and reporting of this research, nor are there any conflicts of interest associated with this publication.

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The author admits that the usage of AI technologies is restricted to language editing and making the paper easier to read. The development of study concepts, data analysis, and scientific conclusions were all done without the assistance of AI tools. The content of this manuscript is still entirely the author's responsibility.