Archives Digitalization for the Greater Good: A Case of Mormon Christians Community and Its Project of Archives Digitalization

Harry Bawono¹, Peny Wulandari²

¹ National Research and Innovation Agency, ² National Archives of the Republic of Indonesia

e-mail: ¹harry.bawono@brin.go.id; ²peny.wulandari@anri.go.id

ABSTRACT

The digital era requires all parties to adapt. The Mormon Christians community is one of the groups adapting by digitalizing its archival practices. Archives are even more crucial in the digital age because they function as cognitive prostheses. The Mormon Christians community has undergone extensive archival digitalization. The Mormon Christians community's digitalization has distinct characteristics. They believe Joseph Smith is the prophet of the restoration and the Book of Mormon is a holy book in addition to the Bible. This community began in the 1800s in the United States and has since spread around the globe. The archival institution was one of their first organs. This community has become more popular worldwide because it has succeeded in creating one of the world's largest genealogical digital archive portals. However, no scientific articles have specifically addressed the relationship between the Mormon Christians doctrine and the archival digitalization process that they have undertaken. The study was conducted from July to October 2022 and took a qualitative approach based on archival research. The research found that the Mormon Christians community's archives digitalization practice is part of their doctrine of the sacredness of archives and other related issues. It is represented on a project called FamilySearch.org. Archives digitalization sponsored by the Mormons community brings benefits not only for them but also for other institutions. For illustration, four cities in the Philippines restored tons of civil records damaged by the Yolanda Storm in 2014 because the Mormon communities had a backup after digitizing tons of them. The study concludes that, despite departing from strong religious doctrines, the Mormons community's digitalization benefits both the internal and external communities. It also demonstrates the significance of good collaboration among multiple institutions for digitalizing archival practices.

Keywords: archives digitalization, religious doctrines, mormon christians community, greater good, collaboration