The Role of the Regional Library and Archives Office in Improving the "Love Reading" Program Through Mobile Libraries for Elementary School Students in the South Tapanuli Regency

Hamongan Harahap
Universitas Medan Area, Indonesia

Corresponding Author: Hamonangan: hamonangan@gmail.com

ARTICLE INFO
Keywords: Services, Mobile Libraries, Love of Reading Program.

Received: 6, May
Revised: 10, June
Accepted: 25, July

©2024 Harahap (s): This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Atribusi 4.0 Internasional.

ABSTRACT
This research aims to determine the role of the Regional Library and Archives Office in enhancing the love of reading program through mobile libraries for elementary school students in South Tapanuli Regency. This research uses a descriptive method with a qualitative approach, and data is collected through direct observation and interviews with librarians. Sample selection is done using purposive sampling technique. The research results indicate that the stages of mobile library services in the implementation of the literacy movement activities are as follows: 1) Preparation stage, consisting of two steps, which are providing literacy materials and facilitator training. 2) Implementation stage, consisting of one step, which is through learning activities. 3) Evaluation/follow-up stage, consisting of one step, which involves conducting a national literacy Olympiad. Efforts to overcome the challenges faced by librarians in implementing mobile libraries include: 1) Human Resources, in this case, the staff. Efforts are made through collaboration with the existing Health and Safety Committees (K3S). Additionally, for mentors, efforts are made by working professionally. 2) Budget, efforts to address the lack of books involve cross-referencing books and applying for procurement or deposits. Efforts for teaching aids involve using the library staff's own resources. Addressing access equipment challenges is done by using any means available to transport books to locations that are not accessible by four-wheeled vehicles.
INTRODUCTION

The library is one of the facilities as a source of learning that can be a force to educate the nation. The library makes a significant contribution to the opening of information about knowledge. With the existence of the library, data or information can be obtained and used as the basis for the development of knowledge. The library is also one of the sources of information that has a very broad influence covering various fields of knowledge, technology, art, and politics (Dafit & Ramadan, 2020).

In the Republic of Indonesia Law Number 43 Chapter 1 Article 1 of 2007 concerning Libraries, the library plays a role as a facility for self-directed learning, lifelong education for individuals and groups in society. In terms of user services, the library has limitations, for example, a regional library can only be accessed by people near its location. Meanwhile, people in remote areas cannot enjoy what is available in a fixed library, even though all communities greatly need information through various reading sources (Mitria & Marlini, 2019).

The presence of the mobile library service program provided by the Regional Library and Archives Office of South Tapanuli Regency is an effort to realize equality and general welfare in the context of easy access to information. This initiative ensures that every member of the community, without exception, has the opportunity to develop their talents and potential. Thus, the public library, in this case, can play a role as an agent that eliminates social exclusion and liberates people from all forms of discrimination (R. Anwar, 2009).

Based on the description of these issues, the Regional Library and Archives Office of South Tapanuli Regency is very interesting to study, especially regarding the role of the library through the mobile library service in increasing the enthusiasm for reading.

The habit of reading is one of the important characteristics to support the progress of the Indonesian nation. It can be observed that the majority of developed countries have a culture of enjoying reading. According to a survey on the global literacy rate involving 61 countries, it is noted that advanced countries such as Finland and Norway rank 1st and 2nd in literacy, while other influential developed countries in the world like the United States, Germany, and England are ranked 7th, 8th, and 18th, respectively. Additionally, in Asia, countries like South Korea, China, Japan, and Singapore hold the 22nd, 19th, 32nd, and 36th positions, respectively (Murni, 2014).

In the past decade, the Indonesian government has successfully expanded access to education and eradicated illiteracy. This can be seen through data from the Literacy Activity Index of the 34 Provinces, which explains that since 1973, the initiation of the Presidential Instruction (INPRES) for Elementary Schools has been recorded, which is one of the efforts to broaden access to education in Indonesia. The same applies to the issue of illiteracy. Based on statistical data recorded during the 70 years of Indonesian independence (2015), in 1971, 39.1% of the Indonesian population was illiterate. Over time, precisely in the recording year of 2014, the percentage of illiteracy had changed from 39.1% to 4.4% in the
year 2000 (the reform era). These figures indicate a significant reduction in cases of illiteracy in Indonesia (Imanugroho & Ganggi, 2019).

However, the success of the government has not been matched by success in cultivating a reading culture among its people. Several studies show less favorable results, and one of them is the research conducted by the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). According to this survey, in 2015, Indonesia's literacy rate was ranked 64th out of 72 countries. Meanwhile, the survey by Central Connecticut State University positioned Indonesia at 60th out of 61 participating countries (Rastuti & Prahmana, 2021). Based on the presented data, it can be observed that the literacy rate in Indonesia is still relatively low. This situation indicates that the implementation of a reading-friendly character education has not been well-executed.

The South Tapanuli Regency Library serves as one of the places and sources for obtaining information broadly. With the library providing facilities in the form of books and other resources, it is hoped that it can enhance reading interest. The development of the community's reading interest refers to the Key Performance Indicators of the South Tapanuli Regency. According to these references, the South Tapanuli Regency Library has implemented these indicators, including the number of library visitors, the satisfaction level of the community with library services, the quantity of book collections, and the number of activities to promote reading interest. However, it does not meet expectations. The South Tapanuli Regency Library can be considered lacking in terms of the number of visitors. According to data from the Library and Archives Office of South Tapanuli Regency, the number of visitors increased slightly but not significantly from 2020 to 2022. Throughout 2022, there were a total of 68,408 visitors (Nasution, 2019).

The low interest in reading is caused by the inadequacy of learning facilities and the reading culture. Even to read a book, one sometimes has to purchase it due to the insufficient collection of books in the local library, which is one of the reasons for the decreasing interest in reading among students and the general public in South Tapanuli Regency.

Based on this, it is explained that the reading activities and abilities of students and the general public in South Tapanuli Regency are still relatively low and need more attention from the government, schools, families, and the surrounding environment. The low reading activities and abilities of students and the public are also influenced by their interest in reading. This indicates that interest in reading is not something inherent in humans from birth but is acquired through learning, created by habits instilled from an early age by family, school, and the surrounding environment (Imanugroho & Ganggi, 2019).

Many sectors have initiated movements or programs to increase interest in reading, starting with the government issuing Minister of Education and Culture Regulation number 23 of 2015, which outlines a policy for students to read for 15 minutes before the start of classes. This policy is known as the School Reading Enthusiast Program (GLS). This movement is the government's effort to cultivate reading habits and enhance the reading interest of students in schools, starting from elementary school level. With the cultivation of reading habits in schools, it
is hoped that the reading interest of the Indonesian community will increase (Diana & Juairiah, 2022).

One effort that can enhance students' interest in reading is by reactualizing the role of the library, especially the mobile library. Mobile libraries and public libraries are essential components of educational infrastructure that must be present in school environments and the general community to support the success of the teaching and learning process as well as achieve the goals of national education in general. This is stated in Government Regulation No. 19 of 2005, Article 42, on National Education Standards, which declares that every educational institution must have facilities including land, classrooms, leadership rooms, teacher rooms, administrative rooms, library rooms, laboratory rooms, production unit rooms, cafeteria rooms, sports facilities, places of worship, play areas, creative spaces, and other necessary spaces to support a systematic and sustainable learning process (Murni, 2014).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK
Mobile Library

A mobile library is a library that moves, carrying a collection of library materials from the library to provide reading services to communities in areas that are not accessible to public libraries. The mobile library service is conducted by regional and district/city libraries to serve communities that find it difficult to access regular library services.

The purpose of a mobile library is to expand library services to communities in areas where fixed libraries cannot reach, provide services to communities that, due to certain conditions, cannot reach regular libraries, promote the library to the community, and enhance reading interest (R. K. Anwar, 2015).

Libraries can do many efforts to enhance human resources, such as in providing collections that meet the needs and demands of the community. The objectives of mobile libraries include:

1. Equalizing information and reading services to the community, reaching remote areas where establishing a permanent library may not be feasible.
2. Assisting public libraries in developing non-formal education for the general public.
3. Introducing books and other library materials to the community.
4. Introducing library services to the public.
5. Increasing reading interest and cultivating a love for books in the community.
6. Collaborating with social, educational, and local government institutions to enhance the community’s capabilities (Dewi & Suharso, 2015).

The main task of a mobile library is to collect, provide, process, maintain, and utilize all library material collections, and to serve the user community in need of information and reading materials.

Another function of a mobile library is to connect reading materials with readers in areas that are relatively far from public libraries or, due to specific situations and conditions, cannot come to the public library. Despite numerous challenges in its implementation, the primary function of a mobile library is to
bring information closer to rural communities, as they may not yet be able to access information independently.

Various facilities and programs are designed with the hope that readers enjoy coming to the library. In the context of creating effective library services, supporting elements are needed to facilitate smooth operations. These elements must be planned in accordance with the goals of the library and the service system (Standar Pelayanan Perpustakaan Dan Informasi Bidang Layanan Koleksi Umum Perpustakaan Nasional RI, 2015).

**Reading Enthusiasm Program**

Enthusiasm for reading is one of the character education values developed in Indonesia. The character "Reading Enthusiasm" comes from the words "enthusiasm" and "read." According to the Indonesian Dictionary, "enthusiasm" means a strong liking, while "read" means to see and understand the content of what is written. Reading habit is defined by the American Library Association (ALA) as the formation of a strong desire to read throughout a person's life. Reading activities have become an integral part of someone's daily life (Murni, 2014).

The love of reading is a reading habit ingrained within oneself. This aligns with Narwanti's opinion, stating that the love of reading is the habit of setting aside time to read various materials that bring virtue to oneself. This opinion is supported by Laili and Naqiyyah, who assert that the love of reading is an individual's habit of engaging in reading various materials. The love of reading will become a reading culture when reading is done continuously.

The love of reading is an attitude and action or behavior of reading that is carried out regularly and continuously. Someone who has a reading culture is a person who, over a long period, has consistently dedicated a portion of their time to reading in their life (Narwanti, 2011).

There are several factors that influence a person's love of reading based on reading interest. Reading interest is a strong desire accompanied by a person's efforts to read. Someone with a strong reading interest will manifest it in their willingness to acquire reading materials and then read them, either out of personal awareness or external encouragement. In broad terms, reading interest is influenced by the following two factors:

1. Internal factors, which originate from within the child, including intelligence, language proficiency, basic needs, gender, and psychological factors.
2. External factors, which come from outside the child, including social, economic, family, peer influence, the impact of educational guidance services, the child's school environment, and so on (Amelia, 2020).

**METHODS**

This research utilizes a descriptive research method with a qualitative approach. The objective is to collect, record, analyze, and provide descriptions and brief explanations of the existing data so that the conclusions drawn can closely reflect the actual reality (Afrizal, 2015). The qualitative approach is employed to observe and analyze the role of the regional library and archives.
office in enhancing the reading enthusiast program through mobile libraries for elementary school students in South Tapanuli Regency. It also aims to identify the challenges and obstacles that occur in the implementation of the program in the region. The primary data for this research come directly from the researcher without intermediaries, such as information collected directly from the researched objects. Meanwhile, secondary data are derived from records or daily reports, representing information received not directly from the original source (Abdussamad, 2021). To obtain holistic and integrative data, and to ensure the relevance of the data to the research objectives, the researcher uses three techniques proposed by Bogdan and Taylor: interviews, observations, and document studies. Data analysis is conducted by elaborating on the obtained data, both qualitatively through structured and detailed descriptions (Sugiyono, 2018).

RESULTS

In supporting the Reading Enthusiasm Program initiated by the Government through the Ministry of Education and Culture, the Archives and Library Agency of South Tapanuli Regency is making various efforts to ensure that literacy activities spread throughout the community in South Tapanuli Regency. This is also in line with the Local Government Policy of South Tapanuli Regency, which issued Regional Regulation Number 1 of 2018 concerning the Cultivation of Reading Enthusiasm. In Regional Regulation Number 1 of 2018 concerning the Cultivation of Reading Enthusiasm, Article 6, Part 1, states that:

1. The cultivation of a love for reading is carried out through families, educational institutions, and the community.
2. The cultivation of a love for reading conducted by the Local Government, as referred to in paragraph (1), is done by facilitating and encouraging the cultivation of reading habits through the provision of quality, affordable reading materials, as well as providing easily accessible library facilities and infrastructure.
3. The cultivation of a love for reading in educational institutions, as referred to in paragraph (1), is carried out by developing and utilizing the library as part of the learning process.
4. The cultivation of a love for reading by the community, as referred to in paragraph (1), is done by nurturing and guiding children and/or adolescents to love reading by providing library facilities in easily accessible, affordable, and quality public places (Haryanto et al., 2022).

Additionally, Article 13 states that:

1. The cultivation of a love for reading through Community Groups can be conducted within the scope of neighborhood associations, community units, villages, districts, district leader deliberations, integrated health
posts, family welfare development, youth organizations, places of worship, and other community organizations.

2. The cultivation of a love for reading through community groups, as referred to in paragraph (1), can be carried out in both government and private environments.

3. Every leader of a community group, as referred to in paragraph (1) and paragraph (2), facilitates infrastructure and facilities.

4. The implementation of the cultivation of a love for reading by community groups, as referred to in paragraph (1) and paragraph (2), can be conducted in enclosed or open spaces (Fatmawati, 2022).

Based on the South Tapanuli Regency Regional Regulation mentioned above, the Archives and Library Agency of South Tapanuli Regency has implemented it in accordance with the regulations. This includes enhancing facilities and infrastructure, adding collections, especially children's collections, and collaborating with reading parks or literacy activists in South Tapanuli Regency to carry out literacy activities aimed at improving literacy skills and reading interest in the community, especially among children.

DISCUSSION

The stages of mobile library services in the Reading Enthusiasm Program for the community of South Tapanuli Regency, according to the guidelines of the Ministry of Education and Culture for the national Reading Enthusiasm Program, are as follows:

The first stage is the preparation stage, and the preparation steps taken in the Reading Enthusiasm Program of the mobile library involve providing literacy materials and conducting literacy facilitator training. There are several criteria for determining the provision of literacy materials. The type of book chosen for literacy materials includes folktales, and the content of the book must be positively oriented to foster positive character development.

Physically, the types of collections needed for a library can be categorized into books and non-books. The book category can include various types such as non-fiction books consisting of daily life stories, historical accounts, popular science, magazines, newspapers, science, sports, art, biography or autobiography, and motivation. Meanwhile, the fiction category may include short stories, novels, and others. In practice, the provision of literacy materials for the Reading Enthusiasm Program in the mobile library of South Tapanuli Regency is in line with the Reading Enthusiasm Program guidelines. The types of books available in the mobile library include folktales, fairy tales, and more. For the general public, there are also novels, short stories, books about cooking, books about politics, and more.

Facilitators include officials from the Ministry of Education and Culture (Kemendikbud), Provincial/District/City Education Offices, universities, teachers, school principals, school supervisors, Kemendikbud Regional Work Units (UPT), parents, and literacy activists. In this research, the term "facilitator" refers to librarians or library staff. Facilitator training consists of two types, namely Type A and Type B. Type A training targets department heads/section
heads/section heads of Provincial/District/City Education Offices to increase awareness and change mindsets. Meanwhile, Type B training targets teachers, school principals, school supervisors, literacy activists, parents, and UPT staff from Kemendikbud to develop literacy through facilitators who participate in training in schools, families, and communities. The training materials include the GLN roadmap, GLN guide module, GLN module, facilitator candidate training guidelines, as well as GLN assessment and evaluation guidelines. The goal of facilitator training is to develop a GLN facilitator team capable of facilitating the process of improving participants' skills as facilitators for teachers, school principals, school committees, school supervisors, literacy activists, and UPT staff from Kemendikbud (Prabowo et al., 2023).

The on-site fact is that the facilitator training, in this case, involving librarians or library staff for the Reading Enthusiasm Program in the mobile library of South Tapanuli Regency, is in accordance with the Reading Enthusiasm Program guidelines. The training is not conducted by the mobile library itself but rather by the Archives and Library Agency. However, the training remains in line with guidelines such as loud reading and, in this case, storytelling.

The second stage, the implementation stage, in carrying out the Reading Enthusiasm Program in the mobile library involves cultural reading activities. Reading is a complex skill, intricate, involving a series of smaller skills. Good reading skills will support success in other areas.

The benefits of reading include the following:

1. Reading enhances vocabulary and knowledge of grammar and sentence structure. Through reading, we gain a better understanding of the proper use of language according to the situation or context of the conversation.
2. Many books and articles encourage introspection and pose serious questions about our values, feelings, and relationships with others.
3. Reading sparks imagination; a good book invites us to envision a world with all its events, locations, and characters. The images gathered from each book or article linger in the mind over time, building a network of ideas and emotions that form the basis for creative thinking. Reading is also beneficial for practicing writing. We can write about various things inspired by the readings we engage with (Rohman, 2022).

The implementation stages carried out in the Reading Enthusiasm Program of the mobile library involve reading in crowded places such as schools, town squares, and others. Besides reading, there are also storytelling and smart literacy box activities. Activities conducted in schools involve reading. After the mobile library arrives, the librarian and school personnel choose a location and initiate reading activities for children. After reading, children are selected to come forward bravely and retell what they have read. Besides schools, the mobile library also visits car-free days or town squares. This activity is conducted every Sunday with the routine of reading, and for the general public or parents accompanying children, they tell stories to their children. Furthermore, the mobile library visits public facilities such as health centers, markets, integrated health posts, and others. This activity is conducted based on community requests and takes place when schools are on holiday (Dewi & Suharso, 2015).
In addition to reading, storytelling is also an activity in the Reading Enthusiasm Program of the mobile library. Storytelling involves retelling stories of legends, fables, heroism, or other tales using oral narration. The stories told can be funny, exciting, or even scary events. There are many ways to develop children's morals, one of which is through storytelling. Through storytelling, we can establish a mental connection and communicate with children, thereby fostering a loving relationship.

Next is the Smart Literacy Box activity or KOLECER (Smart Literacy Box). KOLECER is a mini-library installed on pedestrian routes, commonly known as Street Libraries. KOLECER is a wooden cabinet inspired by telephone boxes in the UK. Each KOLECER can hold 80 books, which can come from various sources such as institutions, foundations, or the wider community willing to donate books. The goal of KOLECER is to serve as a container to facilitate public access to books without having to go to a public library. Additionally, KOLECER aims to improve literacy in the community of South Tapanuli Regency. Daily routines, aside from reading, include discussions led by reading parks in South Tapanuli Regency, storytelling, coloring, and other activities. Additionally, there are also training sessions or seminars. These activities aim to attract people to come to KOLECER (Kiasati & Heriyanto, 2022).

The third stage is evaluation/follow-up. This stage is a tool or procedure used to understand and measure something in a given context using predetermined methods and rules. Evaluation results typically provide information about attributes or characteristics present in individuals or objects involved. Besides using tests, data can also be gathered through surveys, observations, interviews, or other appropriate instruments. Evaluation in the Reading Enthusiasm Program is carried out through organizing Olympiads or competitions. Some of the competitions include narrative reading contests, text summarization competitions, text conversion competitions, role-playing competitions, and literacy clinic competitions (Jariah & Marjani, 2019).

The on-site fact is that the evaluation of the Reading Enthusiasm Program activities is appropriate, but the competition activities are conducted by the Archives and Library Agency of South Tapanuli Regency. The evaluation carried out by the mobile library only determines data on schools that have not been visited, among other things.

Every activity will face obstacles in its implementation. In this activity, the staff of the mobile library in South Tapanuli Regency encountered several obstacles during implementation, such as human resources, including officers and assistants, as well as insufficient budget causing a lack of supporting facilities such as collections and other supporting tools.

Human resources in the library are a crucial pillar that determines the success of a library in fulfilling its functions; therefore, they must always be developed according to needs. Human Resources (HR) in the library play a crucial role in the success of the library’s functions and contribute to achieving its goals; hence, high-quality HR is essential (Patonengan, 2021).

However, the on-site fact is that the human resources collaborating with the mobile library in implementing literacy activities lack cooperation. For example,
officers responsible for processing school data sometimes have outdated information. In the field, there may be new schools, but they are not yet updated in the data. To overcome this obstacle, it can be addressed by actively visiting schools through K3S or conducting direct surveys of schools.

Additionally, there is a lack of cooperation from school assistants in accompanying children during literacy activities in the mobile library. Efforts to overcome this obstacle involve conducting activities professionally, whether or not there is support from school assistants. The mobile library literacy activities continue to run despite the presence or absence of school assistants (Hayun & Haryati, 2020).

In essence, all libraries, regardless of their form or size, to fulfill their tasks and functions, require adequate financial support. Budgeting is closely related to the institutional planning process because resources and activities will require a budget to achieve the goals of the library or information center. The budget includes plans for revenue, expenses, wealth estimates, capital, income, and future costs. The figures indicating the amount of money become a standard for measuring future activities.

To ensure effective budget utilization, a budget should have the following characteristics:
1. Predictive capability.
2. Clear communication channels, authority, and responsibilities.
3. Accurate and timely information.
4. Relevance, comprehensiveness, and clarity of information.
5. Organizational support from all involved parties (Ramanda et al., 2021).

The on-site fact is that the budget for the mobile library is still inadequate to carry out literacy activities. The insufficient budget has led to problems with the mobile library’s facilities, such as a lack of books, storytelling aids, and access tools.

The librarian’s efforts to overcome these obstacles include addressing the shortage of books by cross-utilizing books on the mobile library. For instructional aids, initiatives or creative solutions are implemented by the librarian. Regarding access tools, efforts involve carrying books by hand or any available means, ensuring that literacy activities continue (Nurpratama, 2018).

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Archives and Library Agency, through the mobile library of South Tapanuli Regency, actively supports the “Reading Enthusiasm” program initiated by the government through the Ministry of Education and Culture’s regulation. In this movement, there are stages that must be followed according to the guidelines. These stages include the preparation stage, implementation stage, and evaluation stage. In the preparation stage, two steps are essential: the provision of literacy materials and literacy facilitator training. However, the mobile library does not conduct literacy facilitator training. Instead, the Archives and Library Agency organizes training sessions, including loud reading or storytelling. During the implementation stage, the mobile library carries out activities such as reading, storytelling, and Smart Literacy Box activities. In the final stage, the evaluation stage, the mobile library’s evaluation process does not
fully align with the guidelines. However, the public library aligns with the guidelines by organizing competitions such as storytelling contests, poetry contests, and others, held annually.

In carrying out literacy activities, the mobile library faces various challenges, including human resources consisting of officers and assistants, and budget constraints covering books, instructional aids, and access tools. To overcome these challenges, the mobile library staff employs various strategies. To address human resource challenges, the mobile library systematically identifies school names through the K3S system in the district. Regarding assistants, efforts are made to work professionally, meaning that whether or not there is support from school assistants, the mobile library activities continue. For budget-related challenges, such as acquiring books, librarians submit book titles to procurement services or deposits. Cross-utilization involves taking books from other mobile libraries. Regarding instructional aids, librarians creatively tell stories, even without supporting tools. To address the lack of access tools, the mobile library utilizes plastic containers or anything available to ensure that literacy activities continue.
REFERENCES


