
Community Development in Rural Public Libraries: Supporting Social Inclusion and Library Transformation

*Desarrollo comunitario en las bibliotecas públicas rurales:
apoyando la inclusión social y la transformación de las bibliotecas*

**Silverius Djuni PRIHATIN, Safirotu KHOIR, Ida Fajar PRIYANTO, Araf ALIWIJAYA,
Tri Rahma Kusuma WARDANI, Dyah Ayu Kusuma DEWANDARU**

Graduate School, Library and Information Management, Universitas Gadjah Mada (Indonesia),
Teknika Utara Street, Pogung Kidul, Sleman Regency, Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta 55284, Email: djuni-str@ugm.ac.id

Resumen

Se explora el papel de las bibliotecas públicas en el desarrollo de las comunidades rurales y su impacto en la inclusión social a través de un estudio de caso. La Oficina Regional de Bibliotecas y Archivos de Gunungkidul (la biblioteca pública de Gunungkidul) llevó a cabo una réplica del Programa de Transformación de Bibliotecas Basado en la Inclusión Social (SILT) para apoyar el desarrollo de las comunidades rurales. Los métodos de recopilación de datos incluyeron observación participante y debates de grupos focales en los que participaron 5 facilitadores de la biblioteca y 10 participantes de las comunidades rurales. Los resultados indican que los centros comunitarios actúan como lugares para compartir información y actividades comunitarias. Dos bibliotecas rurales, situadas en Kalurahan Mulo y Kalurahan Tepus, en el distrito de Gunungkidul, realizan dos actividades de desarrollo comunitario relacionadas con el batik. El programa de formación facilitado por la biblioteca permite a las comunidades rurales participar activamente en actividades sociales, económicas y culturales. Se evidencia que las actividades de formación organizadas por la biblioteca no sólo sirven de plataforma para preservar la cultura local, sino que también ofrecen oportunidades de desarrollo económico a la comunidad. La investigación subraya la importancia del papel de las bibliotecas de pueblo en la promoción de la inclusión social y el desarrollo de las comunidades rurales.

Palabras clave: Transformación bibliotecaria. Bibliotecas públicas rurales. Desarrollo comunitario. Comunidades. Iniciativas comunitarias. Inclusión social. Batik. Indonesia.

1. Introduction

Although have been discussed in decades, the library social inclusion program in Indonesia has been organized formally since 2011 when the Indonesian Coca-Cola Foundation took on the program's implementation from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to manage *PerpuSeru*, which means the exciting libraries. The *PerpuSeru*

Abstract

This research aims to explore the role of public libraries in the development of rural communities and its impact on social inclusion through a case study. The replication of the Social Inclusion-Based Library Transformation (SILT) Program was carried out by the Regional Library and Archives Office of Gunungkidul (the Gunungkidul public library) to support the development of rural communities. Data collection methods included participant observation and Focus Group Discussion (FGD) involving 5 facilitators from the library and 10 participants from rural communities. The results indicate that community centres act as a place to share information and community activities. Two village libraries, located in *Kalurahan Mulo* and *Kalurahan Tepus*, Gunungkidul district, have two community development activities related to batik. The empowerment program facilitated by the library enable rural communities to actively engage in social, economic, and cultural activities. It is evident that the training activities organized by the library not only serve as a platform for preserving local culture but also provide economic development opportunities for the community. The research highlights the importance of the role of village libraries in promoting social inclusion and the development of rural communities.

Keywords: Library transformation. Rural public libraries. Community development. Communities. Community initiatives. Social inclusion. Batik. Indonesia.

program began with a brief discussion when Bill and Melinda Gates invited librarians from Indonesia to the IFLA conference in Seoul, South Korea, in 2006. After several years of preparation, the program was finally initiated with a training-for-trainers session in 2011. Initially, *PerpuSeru* aimed to assist librarians in becoming trainers before they developed their communities and designed their public libraries as community

learning centers that provide training for the public and support the community to enable them to practice what they learned from the training.

For 11 years, the *PerpuSeru* program has provided training to 586 Village Public Libraries and 104 District Libraries in 18 provinces. Currently, more than 1.000 village libraries have joined this program. Public libraries have been engaging in community activities from 2011 to 2017. The Head of the National Library of the Republic of Indonesia stated that the *PerpuSeru* program has had a social impact in creating a better quality of life for the community (Mahatma, 2017).

The implementation of the *PerpuSeru* program by libraries involves providing guidance, training, and practical experience. Provincial libraries usually support the program by organizing or facilitating sharing sessions among various libraries at the provincial level. The training provided by *PerpuSeru* for librarians during the educational staff training includes theoretical activities and best practices for the community, covering work planning, excellent services, community empowerment, and information technology promotion.

The implementation of the *PerpuSeru* program “training for trainers” is carried out directly by the *PerpuSeru* program team. The program for the community is conducted by both librarians and partners or volunteers who are willing to assist the community in participating in various activities, ranging from creating products, producing food, to online marketing and practicing cultural performances—all related to local resources, historical roots, and local traditions.

The current community development activities are being vigorously pursued; however, numerous challenges are emerging, including the pandemic. The COVID-19 pandemic, which has affected the world for nearly 3 years, has brought about many changes in various life sectors with various impacts that need to be studied and analyzed. Libraries are one of the institutions that have played a role in assisting communities during the COVID-19 pandemic. The contribution of libraries during and after COVID-19 has become crucial, especially in aspects of community empowerment through various programs that prioritize social inclusion and library transformation.

Libraries have not only served as information providers but also as learning spaces for the community. The available information sources in libraries facilitate the community in improving their literacy. However, the information provided by the library should align with the information needs of the community, enabling them to utilize these sources optimally. Information sources are not limited to books, newspapers, magazines,

journals, and similar materials but also include other forms such as training and practical activities that can be utilized for community development. Therefore, to achieve improved community literacy, the National Library has launched the Social Inclusion-Based Library Transformation (SILT) program, implemented by libraries across various provinces in Indonesia and currently involving more than 1.000 libraries. While libraries in Indonesia participate in this program, one of the active participating regions is the Regional Library and Archives Office of Gunungkidul.

Since 2011, the SILT program has received operational funding support from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation through the Coca-Cola Foundation. This collaboration began with the establishment of the *PerpuSeru* program, which involved “training for trainers” such as librarians from district and city libraries in Indonesia were trained to become speakers or trainers to empower the community. Activities carried out in libraries for community empowerment included training in batik making, food processing using local resources (from the surrounding environment), cultural preservation, and digital marketing. These activities were successfully conducted by libraries in various regions across Indonesia. However, in 2018, the *PerpuSeru* program concluded, and the National Library of Indonesia took over the role of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation as the funding supporter.

The SILT program in Gunungkidul Regency was initially conducted at the Gunungkidul Library and Archives Office (GKLAO) or Dinas Perpustakaan dan Kearsipan Gunungkidul (*DISPUSSIP*). However, in 2020, the activities were shifted to village libraries to prevent the spread of COVID-19 during the pandemic. The transfer of SILT program activities to village libraries was primarily intended to avoid mass gatherings and anticipate the spread of COVID-19.

In Gunungkidul Regency, there are 148 village libraries with various conditions and activities. One successful example of a village library that has transformed by involving community development is the Nglipar village library, which utilizes library land for farming and processing crops into value-added food products, such as cassava chips. Additionally, the library provides space to sell processed products made by the community. Another successful village library in implementing the SILT program is the Kelor village library. The librarians provide training to the local community on utilizing moringa trees in the village. Some products successfully processed by the community through SILT training in utilizing moringa include hand and body lotion made from moringa leaves, moringa chips, and moringa tea. Rural

public libraries have significant potential to be positive agents of change in their communities. By developing appropriate programs and services, libraries can help communities learn, grow, and prosper.

The Social Inclusion-Based Library Transformation (SILT) program is an effort undertaken as a form of library service committed to improving the quality of life and well-being of the surrounding community (Public Relations Team, National Library of Indonesia, 2021). The main goal of the social inclusion-based library transformation program is to reduce marginalized communities (Purniawati, 2022). This program is expected to raise awareness among communities to develop their potential, utilize the surrounding environment, protect culture, Human Rights, and provide opportunities for entrepreneurship, thus reducing dependence on external parties (Public Relations Team, National Library of Indonesia, 2021). More research is needed to understand better how public libraries support the community empowerment particularly for the remote areas (Salemink et al., 2017). The aim of the paper is to describe programs and activities related to the Social Inclusion-Based Library Transformation (SILT) Program in Gunungkidul region in Yogyakarta Indonesia. It also aims to describe the analysis of the community empowerment as part of the support for social inclusion.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Community Development for Rural Area Through Libraries

Rural library refers to libraries or library systems that serve communities in rural areas, where most of the population is engaged in agricultural and livestock activities and resides in remote areas (Reitz, 2004). Kempson (1986) stated three main principles to be considered in creating and operating rural libraries: firstly, rural libraries should not only focus on providing print materials; secondly, rural libraries should have strong roots in the community and be mostly managed by community members themselves; and thirdly, rural library services should function as channels for the transfer of information that flows both to and from the local community. The strength of rural libraries is believed to lie in their ability to provide highly personalized services to the village communities.

Rural areas have the potential to be one of the community groups with limited access to information. Nwokocha & Chimah (2016) found that the major weakness of rural communities, such as farmers, artisans, and less skilled workers, is

the lack of information in a language or form that they can access. However, rural communities need adequate information to live and participate in social activities (Seneviratne, 2007). Therefore, the provision of information resources and community development for rural areas becomes crucial.

Information has become a crucial resource in current community development. Information is needed for empowerment, decision-making, and the development of rural communities (Unagha & Ibenne, 2011). The utilization of information can create awareness among community members and contribute positively to the social, political, educational, and economic development of any community (Idiegbeyan-Ose et al., 2015; Kamba, 2010). Therefore, community development, leveraging information, can enhance the quality of life and economic improvement in rural communities. Ideas and strategies to revitalize the economy of rural communities come from various stakeholders, including rural sociologists, scholars, economic developers, and increasingly, librarians (Hancks, 2012).

Both developing and developed countries' libraries share the same mission. Aabo (2005) stated that the mission of public libraries is to equip patrons with "ongoing knowledge development, personal skills, and civic skills, and lifelong learning." Aabo further emphasizes that access to this knowledge should be distributed with equal opportunities for everyone in various forms of information. Public libraries are expected to create better library services for potentially excluded individuals, ensuring they fulfil their mandate to foster the formation of social capital. (Khoir et. Al, 2017). The equal distribution of information becomes one of the responsibilities of libraries in rural areas, such as community libraries. Community libraries have received increased attention in recent years as a mechanism through which libraries can contribute to addressing issues of social exclusion (Feather, 2003). Rural public libraries are ideally located and have the foundation to play a larger role in community development (Abu et al., 2011).

Community development is greatly influenced by the availability of information, the programs implemented, and the willingness of the community itself. Camble (1994) argued that the success of rural information programs depends on the availability and utilization of quality information by rural development workers and the rural community. However, Camble continued that many rural development programs in developing countries fail because they are not planned with adequate relevance to information. In line with this, Abu et al. (2011) found that the potential for community

development from rural public libraries is only partially realized, indicating that there are still opportunities for beneficial development for the community. On other side, the participatory empowerment process encourages village residents to form closer and more harmonious relationships with each other (Khoir & Davison (2018).

In Australia, rural public libraries offer various innovative and creative programs that bring communities together and break down barriers related to age, ethnicity, culture, socioeconomic status, language, and geography (Kranich, 2001). Libraries require proper guidance and steps to make a maximum contribution to community development. The State Library of Victoria (2005) has identified four main ways in which public libraries can contribute to community empowerment:

1. Providing free public access to computer resources and information technology.
2. Assisting communities in finding information, thereby creating a more informed society.
3. Running programs that encourage lifelong learning and literacy in the community.
4. Building relationships among individuals, groups, and the government.

2.2. Social Inclusion

Social inclusion is related to social exclusion. Social exclusion is a concept formed by society about those marginalized due to specific conditions that render their voices unheard (Davey & Gordon, 2017; Edwards et al., 2001). Social inclusion involves activities and efforts for individuals at risk of exclusion to participate fully in community life (Lockyer-Benzie, 2004; Priyanto et al., 2023).

Social inclusion is a concept that includes efforts and policies to promote equal opportunities for individuals from various marginalized social backgrounds (Fourie, 2007). Meanwhile, according to Cappo (2002), social exclusion is a process in which individuals are excluded from the social, economic, political and cultural systems that support their integration in the community. Further, Silver (2016) added that social inclusion is a process that encourages social interaction between individuals with different social attributes and opens access to participation in all areas of social life.

In the context of social inclusion, to achieve a country's goal of developing and maintaining inclusive social cohesion towards minorities, empirical studies are needed to develop effective policy and practice frameworks (Khoir et al., 2015). The social dimension of knowledge plays a central

role in the process of social inclusion, representing an alliance between academia, government, the private sector and organized civil society (Suaiden, 2017).

Public libraries are fundamentally obligated to provide comprehensive information and swift services. The ease of patrons in accessing information that aligns with their needs can lead to satisfaction in the fulfillment of informational requirements. According to the National Library of Indonesia (2011), public libraries in districts or cities are intended for the wider community in the respective areas as a lifelong learning facility, without discriminating based on age, race, religion, socioeconomic status, and gender. This aligns with Shiri's (2003) perspective, where public libraries are social institutions offering services based on books and information to various community groups regarding social, political, economic, cultural, and other issues. Public libraries are there to serve the needs of the community both at work and during leisure time. They provide access to knowledge and information through various resources and educational services that can be accessed evenly by all members of the community, regardless of race, age, gender, religion, equality, differences, economic status, and education. As reflected in the reality, regulations governing public libraries, such as Law Number 43 of 2007 concerning Libraries and the IFLA Guidelines for Public Library Service, agree that public libraries serve as a vessel for information provision to support the fulfillment of informational needs. Thus, it can be said that public libraries act as local gateways to knowledge.

In practice, according to Yusuf (1996), public libraries have several functions:

1. Educational function: they contribute to the development and support of education beyond schools and universities, serving as a center for research needs.
2. Information center: public libraries act as providers of information needed by the community.
3. Cultural preservation: they are involved in preserving cultural writings related to the past, present, and future development of culture.
4. Recreational function: public libraries offer recreational reading materials that patrons utilize for leisure and to fill their free time.

On the other hand, Madu & Azobogu (2018) argued that public libraries also function as custodians of book collections, meaning the protection and preservation of collections, making information in collection materials accessible so that

the right individuals can obtain accurate information in a timely manner. Among the various types of libraries developed in modern times, public libraries are the most popular due to their functions. They play a crucial role in the well-being and development of society. According to Obizue & Obizue (2016), libraries act as gateways to knowledge and information that aid lifelong learning, community development, and informed decision-making for every member of society. Therefore, the need for public library services and resources is vital, as many communities have established public libraries through collective community efforts and/or philanthropic assistance.

Public libraries play a crucial role in reaching out to their community. This community can form from the interactions of individuals who may initially be strangers to each other. Encounters with strangers or unknown individuals in the library are highly likely. Nevertheless, the public library is a safe space for meeting unknown people, and such encounters can be termed as informal meetings. In this context, the library can become a place for developing informal relationships that are safe for anyone. Goulding (2009) expressed the role of public libraries as follows: (1) a place that feels good and that makes people proud; (2) an idea that is grounded in our lives; (3) focusing on people and where they live; (4) based on the relationships that staff build and the services that are developed; and (5) a unique space.

The library, as a unique space, has the potential to support social inclusion. It means that anyone can access the library space regardless of their identity (Moran, 2021). It can be said that public libraries also serve as places that support social equality and social inclusion. Scott (2011) summarized five points regarding the contributions of public libraries, including: (1) libraries serve as a conduit to access information and to learn; (2) libraries encourage social inclusion and equity; (3) libraries foster civic engagement; (4) libraries create a bridge to resources and community involvement; and (5) libraries promote economic vitality within the community.

The contribution of public libraries to social inclusion has become a noteworthy focus. Public libraries play a role in enhancing the quality of life through information (Moran, 2021) and fostering social inclusion (Goulding, 2009). Based on these phenomena, libraries now play a role as places that support social inclusion, known as social inclusion-based libraries. Social inclusion-based libraries provide facilities to their community, enabling equal participation by developing potential based on cultural diversity or empowerment (Wiyono, 2021). The success of a grassroots initiative that insisted on developing a higher level

of digital literacy to ensure that rapid technological advancements did not isolate it from society at large (Khoir & Davison, 2019). Therefore, libraries, in the context of social inclusion and community development, have a significant role.

3. Data Collection Methods

3.1. Participant Observation and Focus Group Discussion

This research is a qualitative study focusing on community empowerment through providing a training. The data collection method used two approaches, namely a participant observation and Focus Group Discussion (FGD). Participant observation was carried out by directly observing participant interactions and participation during the community empowerment training.

After participants completed the practice in training, FGDs were carried out to provide participants with the opportunity to express their opinions and experiences during the activity. Through a combination of these two methods, this research integrated direct observation and in-depth feedback from participants, enriching understanding of the effectiveness of training interventions in the context of community empowerment.

In the research on "Community Development in Rural Public Libraries: Supporting Social Inclusion and Library Transformation", the research method approach that can be used is participant observation and Focus Group Discussion. Participant observation will enable the researcher to play a role as a participant in community activities at the rural library, thus directly observing community interactions and dynamics. The primary role of the researcher in this approach is to collect data through direct observation, while maintaining group awareness of the researcher's observational activities (Kawulich, 2005).

The participant observation approach aligns with the broader qualitative research paradigm, where the researcher is considered the primary instrument for observing and collecting data (Creswell & Creswell, 2017; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Qualitative assumptions, such as a focus on processes, interest in meaning, and an inductive approach, guide the research to understand how communities attribute meaning to their lives and how rural libraries can be transformational centers supporting social inclusion (Mackellar, 2013; Merriam, 1988).

In addition to participant observation, data collection can be enriched through Focus Group Discussions. This method allows researchers to conduct face-to-face, telephone, or internet interviews

with participants from the village community. By involving six to eight informants in each group, open-ended questions can be posed to explore the community's views, opinions, and understanding of the rural library as a community development agent (Creswell, 2008).

3.2. The Art of Selecting Libraries

The implementation of the Social Inclusion-Based Library Transformation (SILT) Program requires the selection of village libraries for training. This is done to establish a selection mechanism and criteria for beneficiary libraries. Additionally, the goal of selecting village libraries is to assess villages with the potential for library and community development. The Gunungkidul Library and Archives Office (GKLAO) conducts an annual selection of village libraries, choosing 5 village libraries for guidance and training.

The selected libraries must meet three criteria, which include expressing a commitment to implementing the SILT program, demonstrating commitment and willingness to participate in program activities, and pledging to continue providing services to the community. Additionally, other criteria are needed in the selection process, such as library managers and village officials who are willing to participate in the SILT program. Library managers and village officials are committed to implementing the SILT program and applying the materials provided through the Library and Information Technology and Communication Development Strategy training. They are committed to providing services that meet the needs of the surrounding community through the village library.

The process of selecting the village libraries guided by GKLAO involves five stages. Firstly, GKLAO introduces the SILT program to library managers and village officials. Secondly, GKLAO provides a SILT program willingness form that must be filled out by the village authorities. Thirdly, GKLAO verifies the data of the selected village libraries. Fourthly, GKLAO assesses and decides on the village libraries that pass the selection. Lastly, GKLAO reports to the Specuak Region of Yogyakarta Library and the National Library of the Republic of Indonesia.

The library selection process conducted in the SILT program resulted in two village libraries: Mulo Village Library and Tepus Village Library. Both villages have urgent needs to empower and provide skills to the community. One of the main challenges faced by village libraries in Gunungkidul is the lack of understanding and knowledge about library development strategies.

3.3. The Facilitators and Participants

In both methods, the role of the facilitator is crucial to create an environment that supports open discussion and comfort for participants who may not be acquainted with each other (Ochieng et al., 2018). Combining participant observation and Focus Group Discussions provides a holistic approach to gaining a profound understanding of the potential of the village library in supporting community development and social inclusion.

Before the training is conducted, there are two activities: the selection of village libraries and the socialization of the SILT program. The selection and socialization aim to choose village libraries, explain the program, and seek commitment from the village library managers.

In this research, informants were pseudonyms to maintain confidentiality and privacy. The participants in this research are 10 individuals from two *Kalurahan*:

<i>Village</i>	<i>Participants' name</i>
Kalurahan Tepus	Yuda
	Mila
	Luki
	Ani
	Nia
Kalurahan Mulo	Yeni
	Indah
	Sri
	Yongki
	Angga

Table 1. The Participants

The goal of building community digital literacy is to enhance the digital literacy capacity of village library managers through the ICT training program.

The interview transcriptions were examined through content analysis methods and divided into specific themes (Holsti, 1969). These themes were identified from the topics discussed by interview participants about the training. Participant observation and interviews were designed to complement each other in collecting rich data and providing comprehensive insights into the phenomenon under the study. All quotes from respondents are reported verbatim except for certain privacy matters.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Informing and Preparing Community for Involvement

After the village library selection process, the next stage is to conduct the SILT program socialization to the selected village libraries. This socialization serves four purposes: to provide an understanding of the SILT concept and policies to the village library representatives, to convey an understanding of efforts to improve community literacy through SILT, to provide information about the stages and schedule of SILT implementation, and to strengthen the commitment of the library managers and village officials involved in implementing the SILT program. In this regard, socialization is divided into two forms of activities: pre-socialization and the main socialization event.

The pre-socialization activity is also referred to as the strengthening of the commitment of the selected village libraries. This activity involves introducing the SILT program to village officials who play a crucial role in program implementation. It also provides information to relevant parties about the schedule of the Library Development and Information Technology and Computerization Strategy training. The discussion about the training will be presented in the following subsection. The village officials involved include the Village Head, the village library manager, the chairperson of the youth organization, the chairperson of the Family Welfare Development, and community leaders. The pre-socialization activities are conducted by the office in two villages, namely Mulo Village and Tepus Village. After introducing the SILT program, the next activity is the socialization attended by village officials from Mulo Village and Tepus Village, held at the Department of Library and Archives of Gunungkidul.

This socialization activity involves presenting materials related to community well-being and inclusion through the Social Inclusion-Based Library Transformation (SILT) Program. The delivery of these materials aims to ensure that participants understand the SILT program, its activities, and its objectives. Based on the provided materials, a social inclusion-based library refers to how a library can reach and engage all segments of the community, including people with disabilities, the elderly, women, and other communities that were previously unreachable by the library. It emphasizes appreciating diversity.

The socialization of the Social Inclusion-Based Library Transformation (SILT) program was conducted in two sub-districts, namely Kalurahan Mulo and Kalurahan Tepus, in the Wonosari District, Gunungkidul Regency, Special Region of

Yogyakarta. The comprehensive program socialization took place on June 23, 2023. The purpose of this activity was to convey the program preparations for the SILT. The documentation of the SILT program socialization activity is as follows.

4.2. Building Librarian Capacity through Community Digital Literacy

The Training on Library Development-Information and Communication Technology Strategy is conducted to provide training for librarians or village library managers. In this case, the training is carried out by inviting the library managers of Kalurahan Mulo and Tepus. The training aims to enhance their capacity by adopting a participatory learning approach, allowing each participant to interact actively by sharing their experiences and knowledge in an engaging atmosphere. Additionally, this approach maximizes the use of relevant learning tools while providing more opportunities for practical exercises related to the training materials on managing socially inclusive library transformations. The training for the library managers of *Kalurahan* Mulo and Tepus took place from July 11 to 13, 2023.

The core stage of the SILT Program is the three-day training or technical guidance. This training aims to: (1) build an understanding of the importance of literacy through the library, and (2) enhance knowledge of the concept and strategies for developing socially inclusive libraries.

The courses consist of eight topics which are (1) community literacy through socially inclusive library transformation building, (2) digital literacy for the community, (3) improving information services, (4) community engagement, (5) data literacy for library advancement advocacy (theory & practice), (6) management information system (theory & practice), and (8) developing work plans, wrap up, and evaluation feedback. As expressed by Yeni, "the material is clear, adds new ideas, and interestingly develops the library."

The training activities consist of three full days of training, workshops, and simulations, as well as practical exercises. Throughout the training, participants representing their respective village libraries are challenged and simulate what has been taught. As expressed by Ani,

The training method is very interesting because it actively involves participants, and the visual aids used are very colorful, making it easier for participants to understand and grasp the content.

The training is guided by facilitators from the Gunungkidul Library and Archives Agency, known as the synergy team.

The expected skills from the training include the ability to manage the library in accordance with applicable regulations, as well as monitoring and evaluating programs by utilizing information management systems based on *ICT* optimally. Additionally, it is important to have the skills to communicate publicly through various mass media, both online and print, and to use social media to document success stories of library service beneficiaries. This is crucial as part of advocacy and public communication efforts aimed at increasing understanding and support for the library and the services it provides. In line with Aris' statement (Mulo), "The advocacy topic. The point is the strategy to lobby for getting tools or books." By possessing these skills, library managers can be more effective in developing and advancing the library as a valuable information and knowledge center for the community. Consistent with Bekti's statement (Mulo), the advocacy material can be directly applied to developing the village library. Documentation of the *ICT* training activities is as follows.

The *ICT* training is conducted for 3 days, involving 5 trainers. The challenge in this program is time efficiency, as felt by the participant, Yongki (Mulo):

Material simplification must be shortened so that it doesn't go until the afternoon because participants are not optimal in grasping the material. The maximum duration is until 2 pm, so the brain and body are not too strained.

Yongki added that "It requires concentration, leaving other activities, it's hard to divide time, and energy is drained." Angga (Mulo) said, "Long duration, disrupting other activities." The *ICT* trainers are librarians from the Gunungkidul District Library and Archives Office. The trainers are as follows:

Facilitator	Criteria
Guna	National master trainer for National Library of Indonesia's SILT program, intermediate expert librarian
Lala	Intermediate expert librarian
Ara	Intermediate expert librarian, facilitator, PIC
Maria	Head of the library development section
Maya	Intermediate expert librarian, facilitator, library graduate

Table 2. SILT Training Facilitator

4.3. Community Engagement Activities

After undergoing the *ICT* training process, participants have acquired new skills. Trainees are challenged to create a work program related to

community engagement. This program includes three aspects: advocacy to the community, community empowerment programs, and impact documentation. Throughout this process, *ICT* trainers will provide guidance to the village libraries.

Community engagement in SILT has the main goal of raising awareness and community participation in the importance of the SILT program. Additionally, community engagement aims to strengthen the relationship between the community and the library, serving as a platform to gather community aspirations related to the program. The activities conducted include:

1. Conducting socialization with the community through seminars or group meetings.
2. Involving the community by receiving input and suggestions regarding community needs.
3. Disseminating SILT information to the community through social media, newspapers, or brochures.
4. Collaborating with community institutions such as schools and community centers. Demonstrating the positive outcomes of SILT to the community.

4.3.1. Rural Public Library through Community Development Program

After conducting the *ICT* Training, the next step is to provide training for the community. This activity aims to prepare local/village-level human resources for further development and promote the sustainability of the Social Inclusion-Based Library Transformation (SILT) Program through village libraries. The initial step in designing this activity is to discuss with facilitators who have a better understanding of their village's needs and potentials. They are the participants in the training for their respective village libraries and are responsible for creating community empowerment programs. The SILT program facilitators for village libraries consist of village officials, including the *Lurah* (village head), village library manager, head of the youth organization, head of the Family Welfare Development, and community leaders. The results of discussions with the facilitators led to (1) Ecoprint Steam Technique Batik Training in Mulo Village and (2) Batik Tulis Training in Tepus Village.

Training on Ecoprint Batik with Steaming Technique, Mulo Village

The community empowerment program is designed with a focus on making the village community self-reliant, thus enhancing the economy both individually and collectively. The target of this program is the local community with

untapped potential. Mulo Village is an area with local potential that can be utilized by the surrounding community. The potential foliage, such as leaves from the indigo plant, can be used to create batik patterns, and these plants are abundant in Mulo Village. As mentioned by Yeni, the materials for ecoprint batik are available around Mulo Village. Documentation of the ecoprint batik training with steaming technique in Mulo Village can be seen in the following figures.



Figure 1. Steps for Ecoprint Batik Steaming Photocopy Method (Researcher's Documentation)



Figure 2. Products of Ecoprint Batik Steaming Photocopy Training in Mulo Village (Researcher's Documentation)

Batik Writing Training in Tepus Village

There are six types of batik based on their creation, including *batik tulis* (hand-drawn), *batik cap* (stamped batik), *batik lukis* (painted batik), *batik jumputan* (tie-dye batik), *batik kombinasi* (combined batik), and *batik printing*. Each batik-making technique has its own advantages and disadvantages, and one of the techniques that is still preserved to this day is the hand-drawn batik technique. The process involves manual work using a tool called *canting* and wax. In Yogyakarta, the art of making hand-drawn batik is still preserved as part of the culture. As a form of cultural preservation, a batik-making training was conducted at the Bintang Pustaka Library in Tepus Village, Gunungkidul Regency, Yogyakarta. The challenge in involving the community is that most participants are elderly women with declining

memory. This training serves to recall the learning and batik-making processes (Siska). Participants feel empowered as the village library provides training in batik-making for community members who are no longer working. Documentation of the hand-drawn batik training in Tepus Village can be seen in the following image.



Figure 3. Steps of Handwritten Batik (Researcher's Documentation)



Figure 4. Result of Handwritten Batik in Tepus Village (Researcher's Documentation)

4.3.2. Supporting community empowerment: impacts and lesson learned

SILT program is one of the innovative steps to continually provide opportunities for rural communities to develop. Through a series of activities, experiences, and reflections on best practices, the SILT program concept has several lessons learned as follows:

First, it is crucial to understand the context and unique needs of the community residing in the village. Each village has different characteristics, challenges, and natural potentials. Therefore, a one-size-fits-all approach will not be suitable. Before designing and implementing library development programs, comprehensive initial observations of the community must be conducted. This includes understanding literacy needs, reading interests, as well as the social and economic needs of the local community.

Second, collaboration is the key to success. The library development process involving active participation from various stakeholders, including local government, NGOs, educators, community leaders, and the public, has a more significant impact. By building strong partnerships, different resources and expertise can be combined to create more effective and sustainable programs.

Third, the social inclusion approach plays a crucial role in ensuring that the library genuinely serves the entire community. This means that the library must be designed and managed considering the needs of all community members, including those with special needs, the elderly, and the less privileged. By creating a friendly and inclusive environment, the library can become a welcoming place for everyone without exception.

Fourth, in this century, similar to what Linna (2013) mentioned, libraries are not just places to store books but also centers for diverse community activities. By organizing various activities such as book discussions, skills workshops, art performances, and economic activities like batik making, the library can become a lively and dynamic hub for the village community. Therefore, the library not only helps improve literacy and knowledge but also provides tangible social and economic benefits to the community.

Fifth, it is important to recognize and harness the local potential in library development. Local culture, traditions, and wisdom can be valuable resources that can be used to enrich the library's collection and design activities that are relevant to the needs and interests of the community.

Finally, the success of this program requires long-term commitment from all stakeholders involved. Sustainable social and cultural changes take time, patience, and continuous investment. Therefore, it is crucial to ensure ongoing support from the government, NGOs, and the private sector to sustain and develop this program in the long term.

In order to achieve the goals of social inclusion and community development through the library, lessons learned from these experiences should be the foundation for continuous adaptation and improvement. Thus, the library can continue to play a role as a positive agent of change in advancing holistic development in rural communities.

5. Conclusion

This study highlights the importance of supporting community development through the transformation of libraries based on social inclusion. Through various activities and focus group discussions, it can be observed that libraries play a

crucial role in enhancing the capacity of communities through the innovative use of information and communication technology. It is evident that community engagement activities not only improve access to information but also empower communities by enhancing their skills in various areas such as information technology, economics, marketing, agriculture, education, and health.

Community empowerment programs, including Batik Ecoprint and Batik Tulis training, are effective in developing the capacity of librarians and increasing community involvement in rural libraries. This initiative strengthens relations between libraries and the community and increases librarians' skills in managing inclusive libraries.

Empowering communities through trainings based on the local contexts is considered effective. Therefore, local government policies are necessary to regulate and support community empowerment programs. In addition, it is important to provide more trainings tailored specifically to local needs and conditions to maximize the impact of these empowerment initiatives.

Therefore, it can be concluded that the integration of libraries with the community can be an effective strategy to strengthen community capacity and enhance the quality of library services. These innovative steps align with the global trend to address challenges and leverage opportunities in the digital era. The direct approach to the community also serves as a foundation for promoting sustainable development across various sectors of community life based on the principles of social inclusion. Further research can focus on the real impact of community engagement activities in fostering self-reliance and empowerment.

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