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Nadi Suprpto

*Universitas Negeri Surabaya*, [nadisuprpto@unesa.ac.id](mailto:nadisuprpto@unesa.ac.id)

Ahmad Qosyim

*Universitas Negeri Surabaya*

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# Mobile Library in Indonesian Villages: A Form of Sustainable Development Goal in Education (SDG 4)

Nadi Suprpto<sup>1,\*</sup>, Ahmad Qosyim<sup>2</sup>  
<sup>1,2</sup>Universitas Negeri Surabaya, Surabaya, Indonesia  
<sup>\*</sup>Email: nadisuprpto@unesa.ac.id

## Abstract

Mobile libraries synthesize various cultural, cultural, and structural problems to bring information sources closer to the community. In understanding the actual situation and the role of the mobile library in supporting SDG 4, this research was conducted. This research utilized a survey study to the visitors who were interested in visiting the mobile library. Totally, 146 participants were invited to participate in the study. The results of a semi-structured interview supported the quantitative data. The findings succeed in analyzing the frequency of visitors visiting the mobile library, the favorites books, and the perceptions of the benefits among visitors to the mobile library. This research has had a tremendous impact on the community and the government, especially in the success of the national literacy movement program and increasing the culture of information literacy.

*Key words: mobile library, SDG, education, Indonesia*

## Introduction

The library is an institution or institution that provides a collection of written, printed and recorded library materials as a central source of information that is regulated according to standard systems and rules and is utilized for educational purposes, research, dissemination of information and intellectual recreation for the community. In modern life, libraries need to provide appropriate and equitable information services to the community as a whole, around regional library buildings, whether in the Provincial/Regency/City Libraries or for people whose residences are far from the reach of the library building.

So that people in the area can also enjoy information services to increase their knowledge, libraries must exist in their environment. Building a library requires no small amount of money; the Provincial Government has not created a library in every sub-district and village. Therefore, the existence of a suitable facility, namely the Mobile Library, is a solution. A mobile library is a library where reading materials are carried around from one place to another. Services to the community are carried out directly at the library where the library is posted. Then, reading materials that are not borrowed are taken home.

Specifically, the National Library of the Republic of Indonesia (Perpusnas) continues to increase interest in reading for people who are still concerned about distributing mobile library cars to regions so that they are expected to explore villages. The National Library is no longer waiting but comes to the village community through the library car program to villages equipped with internet technology. In the last fiscal year, 2017, the National Library of Indonesia prepared more than 100 cars, each with Rp value. Three hundred million per unit, equipped with generators and multimedia to reach remote villages throughout Indonesia (Rizaty, 2021).

The objectives of the Mobile Library service are:

- (1) To distribute information and reading services to the public to remote areas, and it is not possible to establish a permanent library.
- (2) Assist public libraries in developing informal education for the community.
- (3) Introducing books and other library materials to the public.
- (4) Introducing library services to the community so that culture grows to take advantage of library services.
- (5) Increase interest in reading by developing a love for books in the community.
- (6) Cooperating with social, educational and local government institutions to improve the community's intellectual and cultural abilities (Guidelines for the Implementation of Mobile Libraries, 1992: 4).

Mobile library services are open, democratic because mobile libraries serve all levels of society regardless of social, cultural, economic, educational, belief or other statuses. All citizens, regardless of age, are free to take advantage of mobile library services. The service system used by the mobile library is an open service; visitors are free to search and choose library materials in their car. The existence of mobile library services is expected to reduce the gap in obtaining information. Both cultural and structural factors cause this gap. What is meant by cultural factors is if the information is left behind due to a person's lack of fighting power to obtain it, due to laziness, no support from tradition, or the environment. Meanwhile, suppose the information is left behind due to unavailability of access to information sources, because of injustice or because of the government's indifference to the lives of its people. In that case, this is called a structural factor.



Figure 1. The library car program to villages

From all of this, providing evenly distributed infrastructure across all levels of society will be one solution to the problem of information gaps in society caused by cultural and structural factors. Because people's interest in reading will grow, and a reading culture will be created if people do not have easy access to information sources (reading materials). Indeed, ideally, every community has the same opportunity to get information by buying information sources. Still, it is not a priority considering the purchasing power of significantly fewer people buying books. The price of books, which are still expensive, is another factor that causes people to be farther away from sources of information. If we add to this list the difficulty of going to a public library due to geography—something that is a common problem for most people—then we will understand more and more why Indonesian people's interest in reading or mastery of information is so low. The factors mentioned above, providing mobile library services are a must for the community.

Mobile libraries are a synthesis of various cultural, cultural, and structural problems to bring information sources closer to the community. In addition, mobile libraries have other important purposes:

- (1) Cultivating the community to read, especially the family environment, as a basic need. Whoever is responsible for the family should not view his house as a stable where he only needs to provide water and rice and reproduce. On the contrary, he must view the family as a human unit that is also in dire need of intellectual nourishment, and all members of the family must think of meeting this need;
- (2) Increase the knowledge, understanding, and awareness of the people and train them, especially young people, intellectually, spiritually, and emotionally according to different ages and educational levels;

(3) Overcoming spiritual and intellectual weaknesses caused by the lack of financial ability to buy materials, especially needed books. Preventing economic poverty from causing intellectual poverty;

(4) Accelerate the development of information literacy in the community and eliminate the occurrence of intellectual gaps caused by information gaps.

Data indicated the number of Indonesians aged over ten years who cannot read, write, and count (illiterate) has tended to decline in the last decade (Suprpto, 2016). According to the Central Statistics Agency (BPS), the illiteracy rate in Indonesia was recorded at 6.44% in 2011 (Rizaty, 2021). The illiteracy rate in Indonesia continued to decline to 4.27% in 2015. A year later, the illiteracy rate in the country had risen to 4.62% but fell again to 3.62% in 2020. Indeed, 103 million youth worldwide lack basic literacy skills globally, and more than 60 per cent of them are women (Rizaty, 2021; UNDP, 2021). Triggering scientific literacy could be achieved by several solutions (Yuniar, Suprpto, & Mubarok, 2020). The existence of a mobile library will solve these problems. Reducing the illiteracy rate is suitable with the mission of sustainable development goals (SDGs), especially SDG 4: education (UNDP, 2021).

To understand the real situation and the role of mobile library in supporting SDG 4, this research was conducted. Finally, the purposes of this research are

1. To analyze the frequency for visiting mobile library of visitors.
2. To analyze the favorites books in the mobile library.
3. To analyze the benefits perceptions among visitors to mobile library.

## **Research Method**

This research utilized a survey study to the visitors interested in visiting the mobile library (Suprpto, 2019). The data was collected from November 2019 to March 2020 before lockdown and large-scale social restrictions (PSBB) policy during the Covid-19 pandemic. As the information, Indonesia started implementing PSBB policy on April 2020 based on the Government Regulation No. 21 of 2020, which regulates large-scale social restrictions in response to COVID-19, which allows local governments to restrict the movement of people and goods into and out of their respective areas provided they have obtained permission from the relevant ministry.

Table 1. Demographic factors of participants

Demographic Factor	<i>N</i>	Percentage
Gender		
Male	57	39.04
Female	89	60.96
Age		
< 10 yrs	21	14.38
10 yrs to 15 yrs	32	21.92
15 yrs to 20 yrs	21	14.38
20 yrs to 25 yrs	16	10.96
25 yrs to 30 yrs	24	16.44
> 30 yrs	32	21.92
Education Background		
PhD	1	0.68
MA	4	2.74
BA	22	15.07
Senior High School	24	16.44
Junior High School	28	19.18
Elementary School	67	45.89
Total	146	100.00

The results of a semi-structured interview supported the quantitative data. The data were analyzed descriptively, either quantitative or qualitative. Qualitative data is obtained from respondents or visitors who are willing to be interviewed, for the qualitative data were indicated as a pseudonym. Table 1 shows the demographic factors, including gender, age, and educational background of participants of this research.

## Findings

### *The frequency for visiting mobile library of visitors*

Figure 2 indicates the frequency of visiting the mobile library among visitors. It was clear that most visitors saw the mobile library once a month (39%), and it was about 23% of them visited the mobile library more than four times a month. The remaining visitors visited the mobile library once a week (15%), twice a month (13%), and three times a month (10%).

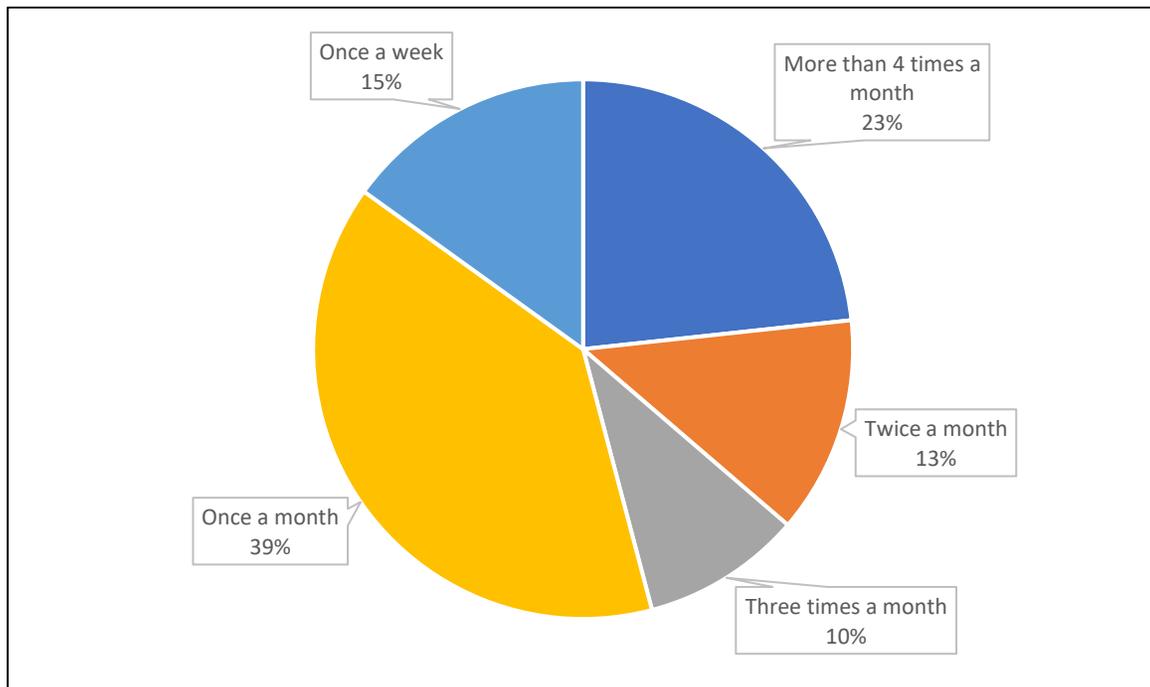


Figure 2. Frequency for visiting mobile library

Some visitors visit the car library each weekend while spending free time while not working, one of them is going to the sub-district city center and stopping by to read a book.

*“I come to visit the mobile library in the town square once a month at the same time for refreshing on Sundays”. (#Joy, 28 yrs)*

Meanwhile, a car library or mobile library helps students find reference materials in doing school assignments.

*“The existence of a mobile library is beneficial for me in doing school assignments, especially finding additional references”. (#Winda, 16 yrs)*

There are also students looking for the existence of a mobile library to research literacy. The researchers also had a chance to meet with the education and culture department officer who was monitoring the services of this mobile library, and he stated that:

*“The existence of a mobile library is beneficial for the community in literacy and improving programs for reading or information literacy”. (#Yusuf, 45 yrs)*

### *The favorites books in the mobile library*

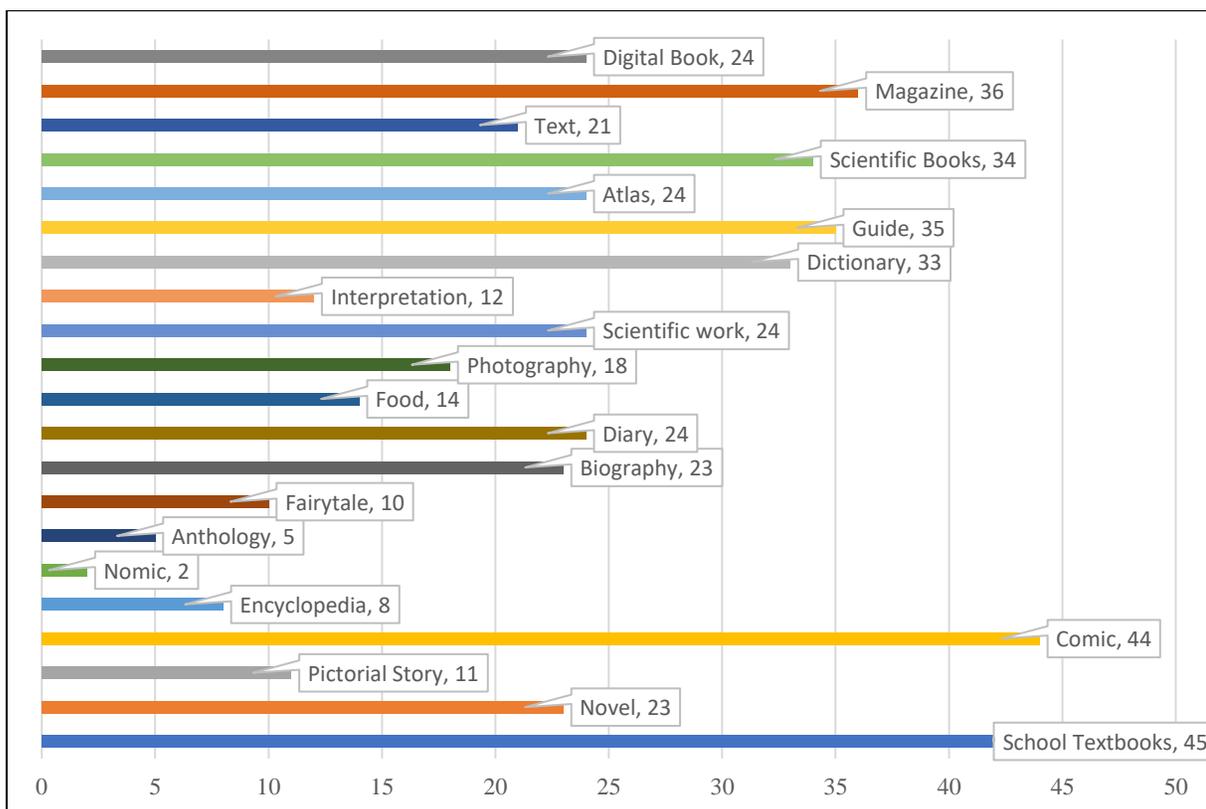


Figure 3. The favorites books in the mobile library

Each respondent or visitor was asked their favorite books when they visited the mobile library, and they might list more than one type of book. Figure 3 clearly states that school textbooks and comics were the favorite books among visitors. Meanwhile, magazines, scientific books, guides, and dictionaries were also referenced by the visitors. With the small number, there were nomic, anthology, and encyclopedia.

*“Comics are my favorite when it comes to car libraries. My hobby is reading comics”.*  
 (#Putra, 12 yrs)

*“I got some school textbooks for free here...rather than buying them in bookstores because I have economic problems”.* (#Rina, 14 yrs)

*“As a mother, I accompany my children to read books in the mobile library, while I can participate in reading books related to cooking recipes and various books related to Indonesian tourism”.* (#Ratu, 39 yrs)

***The benefits perceptions among visitors to mobile library.***

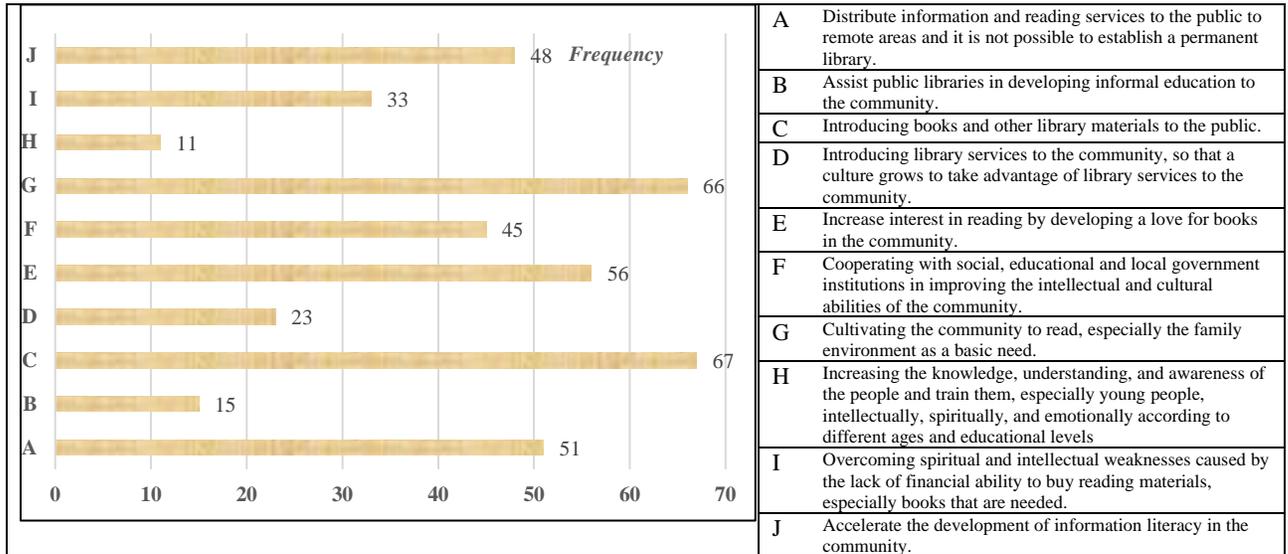


Figure 4. The benefits of mobile library based on visitors' opinions

Figure 4 clearly illustrates the benefits of mobile libraries based on the respondents' opinions. The researchers listed ten expressions that the visitors indicated, and each visitor might reveal more than one expression. Accordingly, the expression: "introducing books and other library materials to the public" and "cultivating the community to read, especially the family environment as a basic need" are the most benefits of visiting mobile libraries based on the visitors' perception. Understanding visitors' perception of the library helps evaluate and develop the program (Akbar & Asmiyanto, 2021; Tseh, 2021).

**Discussion**

In this research, mobile library means car library. However, the definition of mobile library is emergent to the library with utilizing technology (ICT). Along with the development of ICT and the number of mobile users, the term mobile can also be interpreted as a cellular phone (mobile). Due to the rapid growth of cell phone functions that were previously only for calls and SMS, then developed equipped with camera facilities, then able to access the internet and so on, the definition of mobile can refer to access to library needs. M-Library or M-Libraries comes from the word "Mobile Devices" abbreviated M which means mobile device and "Library/Libraries" which means library.

## Mobile Library Technology

The presence of mobile technology needs to be considered in the library. The meaning of the word mobile itself has quite a lot of meanings. Mobile means that it can move or can be moved freely and easily. Mobile can also be interpreted as a high-tech object and can move without cables, such as smartphones, PDAs, tablets, and can also tweet (Bhat, 2021). Transformation, in general, is a structural change, gradual, total, and cannot be returned to its original form (irreversible). Transformation can be related to users, services, ICT facilities, human resources/librarians, and functions & added value. Concerning m-library, it becomes a must for libraries to pay attention to mobile technology to improve library services.

This is because users prefer to use the internet for direct access through various internet connections. Moreover, applications on mobile devices have become more sophisticated and much favored by users. Gadget devices whose names are: BB, iPhone, and Android have become the needs of users in this era. However, some are only as a lifestyle (lifestyle) to not be outdated or other motivations to be accepted in their environment.

Thus, the changing trend of user behavior has resulted in using mobile to support library services. The evolution of information can also be seen in the changes in the way users consume information, which emphasizes interaction, be it humans with humans, humans with computers, or computers with computers. Information seeking behavior and satisfaction of library users in the digital era is critical (Shaikh & Dodiya, 2021).

Library changes occur because there is hope from a new generation of users. Changes also occur because of the possibility of the emergence of new information technology. Some things to consider in the digital information era towards m-library are:

1. *Pemustaka* (users).

The current generation of users is emerging online and can adapt to technology very quickly. To the extent that the terms @ generation and virtual generation appear to be very thick among young people. The shift in the generation of users to become digital experts is very familiar with what is called social networking and games.

2. The transformation of the physical design of the library.

In order for the library to remain a destination for users, it must develop (Kyumana, 2021). If in the past (past) the library was only a place (library as space), then now and before (present and

previously) the library responds to visitors to come (library responds to invite users), then in the future it is the library that must follow the library. following users).

### 3. Information communication technology.

The mobile era leads users as if they consider mobile as a vital tool. Can you imagine when you travel and you miss your cellphone, what happened? Because of the importance of communication, sometimes you have to turn around to get it, right? (Suprpto, Ku, & Chang, 2021). This is an indication that ICT has penetrated into our lives and the interactions made have become a habit (second nature) (Suprpto & Pai, 2015). Technology certainly has a negative and positive impact, depending on how you respond and what you use it for.

### 4. Library services and collection.

A library needs to network to collaborate with other libraries in the use of digital collections (Akbar & Asmiyanto, 2021; Kyumana, 2021). The form of packaging for digital and online information sources should be prioritized by libraries. So even though the statistics of user visits have decreased physically, it is hoped that virtual services will experience a significant increase.

### 5. Librarians and their education and professionalism.

Being a librarian who is competent, has the power of innovation, is creative, and is highly dedicated to advancing is a demand in the era of welcoming m-library.

Libraries can improve service quality by implementing mobile library technology. There are so many mobile application technologies that can be used and allowed to be applied and developed in libraries. What kind of application technology is used depends on the agency's policy that oversees the library and the availability of the budget.

Various types of applications, namely: Quick Response (QR) Code, WiFi/3G connection, Global Positioning System (GPS) sensor, Camera, Accelerometer, Gyroscope, Augmented, Near Field Communication (NFC), E-book, Text Alerts/Notification, SMS Reference, Mobile OPAC, Mobile Content Delivery, Mobile Internet, Library Applications (Software) for Mobile Phones, Library Audio Tours, and so on (Bhat, 2021).

SMS reference services (text message reference), for example, librarians answering user questions sent via short messages (answer reference questions by SMS), LibraryH3lp Android SMS Gateway, SMS Reference (Text-a-Librarian by Mosio, Google SMS) (Perpusnas, 2021). Electronic collections (electronic collections), for example: promoting library collections (promote access to collections) and accessing digital collections (access digital collections)

using smartphones. Access services that reach users wherever they are, for example, interactive SMS service for applications on circulation services (Bhat, 2021). Furthermore, social networking (social networking), how libraries apply media such as Facebook and Twitter in building interaction with users.

Of course, the available facilities will not be of optimal use if they are not appropriately managed. It is precisely in the hands of skilled managers that the above goals can be achieved. For this reason, training for library management staff is a must. They not only have to master the technical issues of the library but also have to be equipped with a piece of knowledge and awareness that in their hands is the key to the progress of this nation. More than that, managers must also realize that being a library manager is a calling from the soul, not just a call to work to earn a living.

### **Conclusion**

This research explored the frequency of visitors visiting mobile libraries, the favorites books, and the perceptions of the benefits among visitors to the mobile library. It was clear that most visitors saw the mobile library once a month (39%). School textbooks and comics were the favorites books among visitors. Meanwhile, magazines, scientific books, guides, and dictionaries were also referenced by the visitors. The expression: “introducing books and other library materials to the public” and “cultivating the community to read, especially the family environment as a basic need” are the most benefits of visiting mobile libraries based on the visitors’ perception. This research has a significant impact on the community and the government, especially in the success of the national literacy movement program and increasing the culture of information literacy.

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