



Library Management Strategies in Meeting The Information Needs Of Library Users at Balai Bahasa Sumatera Utara

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ABSTRACT

Purpose Research. This study examines the strategies of library managers at the North Sumatra Language Center Library in meeting users' information needs. The research highlights the importance of adapting library services to technological developments and the unique role of special libraries in supporting linguistic and literary research. **Research Method.** Using a qualitative descriptive approach, data were collected through observation, interviews, and literature review, then analyzed inductively with the Miles and Huberman model to identify strategies and challenges in library management. **Analysis Data.** The results of the analysis show that library managers utilize linguistic and literary collections, initiate digitization efforts, apply information technology, and promote information literacy to improve accessibility and service effectiveness. **Results.** The study also identifies several obstacles, including limited funding, insufficient infrastructure, and the need for ongoing staff development, that hinder service optimization. **Conclusions.** The findings indicate that the library has taken initial steps toward modernization by integrating traditional and digital resources. Stronger institutional support, technological infrastructure, and librarian competency development are required to maximize its role as a specialized information center. The results are expected to serve as a reference for other special libraries and contribute to the advancement of information literacy and linguistic research at the regional level.

Keywords: *Library Management; Information Needs; Special Library; Information Literacy; Qualitative Research*

A. INTRODUCTION

Libraries are strategic institutions in supporting education, research, and scientific development. Law No. 43 of 2007 states that “library collections are all information in the form of written works, printed works, and/or recorded works in various media that have educational value, which are collected, processed, and served” (Utama, 2009). This shows that collections are the main foundation in library management strategies to meet the information needs of library users.

The availability of collections is an important factor. Abidin, Mar'at, Arsil, & Sulaiman (2023) emphasize that “the availability of collections in libraries is in line with the Provincial Library National Standards, with a total collection of 365,407 copies from 45,792 titles.” Ilham, Rahimah, & Marpaung (2025) add that “planned,

systematic, and responsive collection management has proven to significantly improve the quality of library services.” Meanwhile, Yuliani & Asmara (2025) found that “there is a strong positive relationship between the existence of libraries and the fulfillment of library users' information needs, with a correlation coefficient value of 0.643.”

In addition to printed collections, technological developments require libraries to adapt. Setyawan, Fendy, & Mantasa (2025) state that “libraries no longer function solely as book storage facilities, but as integrated information centers that provide access to various formats and types of information sources in the digital age.” Atika & Sayekti (2023) emphasize that “the application of artificial intelligence (AI) is now revolutionizing modern library services.” Gabriella Patricia Setyawan, Fendy, & Mantasa (2025) add that “AI offers opportunities for libraries to provide more personalized, efficient, and innovative services.”

However, information accessibility also poses a challenge. Hasibuan, Zulaikha, Sari, & Ramadhan (2023) found that “user accessibility to Gale electronic journals at the Yogyakarta Agricultural Development Polytechnic is not fully met due to English language barriers and a lack of socialization.” Santoso (2004) emphasized that “digital collections are archives converted into machine-readable formats for preservation or electronic access purposes.” Sulisty-Basuki (2004) added that “users' information needs are influenced by the range of information available, their background, motivation, professional orientation, and individual characteristics.”

The role of librarians is crucial in management strategies. Hermawan, Rahman, & Mantasa (2024) emphasize that “Bosowa Library services can provide information and facilities to library users well, through library services, library users can obtain the information they need optimally from various media”. Budyman, Desriyeni, & Sondra (2024) emphasize that “librarians in reference services act as a bridge between library users and the information they need, as well as educators in information literacy.” Nurlaksita & Wasisto (2019) add that “reference librarians act as guides and teachers, such as guiding library users to find the desired collection, teaching how to search for valid information, and assisting in the use of OPAC.”

Cooperation strategies are also an important part. Muchtarom & Rukmana (2023) emphasize that “the cooperation between Widyatama University Library and the National Institute of Technology has succeeded in providing information resources in two forms, namely digital and print.” Rahayu et al. (2023) add that “cooperation between libraries can have an impact in helping libraries avoid the obligation to purchase all existing collections and journals.” Putri (2019) emphasizes that “libraries cannot provide services to users on their own, but need to cooperate with other libraries or institutions.” Husna (2017) asserts that “partnerships or cooperation in state university libraries help libraries to promote, market, and develop their collections.” Syarif (2020) adds that “cooperation between libraries is very important because it plays a role in adding to existing information sources and sharing existing information sources.”

Thus, the library management strategy in meeting the information needs of library users covers three main aspects: the availability of adequate collections, the

use of digital technology, and the improvement of librarian service quality and inter-institutional cooperation. This article seeks to examine in depth how this strategy is implemented at the North Sumatra Language Center, so that it can become a model for effective and sustainable specialized library management.

B. METHODS

This study employed a qualitative descriptive approach to explore how library managers at the North Sumatra Language Center Library utilize information resources to meet users' needs. The qualitative method was chosen because it allows for a deeper understanding of phenomena, perceptions, and processes that naturally occur in library services. The research was conducted at the library located in Medan Estate, North Sumatra, beginning in June 2025 until completion. Primary data were obtained through interviews with library staff selected purposively based on their direct involvement in managing information resources, while secondary data were collected from relevant documents, books, journals, and literature related to library management and information literacy. Data collection techniques included direct observation of library activities and user interactions, semi-structured interviews with staff to gain insights into strategies and challenges, and a literature review to strengthen the analysis. The data were then analyzed inductively using the Miles and Huberman model, which consists of data reduction, data display in narrative and tabular form, and conclusion drawing with verification. To ensure credibility, triangulation of sources and techniques was applied by comparing information from interviews, observations, and literature, thereby reinforcing the reliability of the findings.

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Results

The study conducted at the North Sumatra Language Center Library revealed several strategies implemented by library managers to meet the information needs of users:

1. **Utilization of Information Resources**
The library managers primarily rely on linguistic and literary collections to support research activities. These specialized resources serve as essential references for researchers and academics requiring specific data.
2. **Digitization of Collections**
Efforts have been made to digitize selected collections to improve accessibility. Although still limited due to infrastructure and funding constraints, digitization has facilitated faster access to research materials.
3. **Application of Information Technology**
Information technology has been introduced in managing collections and services, making the processing and dissemination of information more efficient. However, technological limitations remain a significant challenge.
4. **Information Literacy Programs**

Library managers play an active role in enhancing users' information literacy by guiding them in searching, evaluating, and effectively utilizing available resources.

5. Challenges Encountered

The study identified several obstacles, including limited funding, insufficient technological infrastructure, and the need for continuous development of human resources.

Field observations and interviews revealed that users at the North Sumatra Language Center Library rely heavily on linguistic and literary collections, particularly for research in local languages. One staff member stated that “most visitors are researchers who specifically request manuscripts and dictionaries related to Batak and Malay languages,” underscoring the specialized nature of the collection. In terms of digitization, librarians reported that “only about 20 percent of rare collections have been digitized due to limited equipment,” although users expressed appreciation for the faster access provided by these digital files. Observations also showed that students often struggled with the online catalog, which prompted librarians to provide informal guidance; as one librarian explained, “we usually sit with them and show how to search effectively, because many are not familiar with OPAC.”

These qualitative findings highlight the active role of librarians in bridging gaps in information literacy. Challenges were also evident in the field: the library's computers were outdated, and during interviews staff emphasized that “funding constraints make it difficult to upgrade infrastructure or provide training.” Such direct testimonies and observed behaviors confirm that the strategies identified—collection utilization, digitization, technology application, and literacy programs—are indeed implemented, but their effectiveness remains limited by structural barriers.

Discussion

The findings indicate that the strategies adopted by the North Sumatra Language Center Library are consistent with the characteristics of special libraries, which focus on specialized collections and targeted services. The emphasis on linguistic and literary resources reflects the institution's mission to support research in language and literature.

Digitization and the application of information technology represent crucial steps toward improving accessibility and efficiency. However, the lack of adequate funding and infrastructure demonstrates that these strategies cannot yet be fully optimized. This is in line with previous studies highlighting the importance of institutional support and digital system development in special libraries.

Information literacy initiatives further strengthen the library's role in meeting users' needs. By equipping users with the skills to search, evaluate, and utilize information independently, the library enhances the overall quality of its services.

Nevertheless, the challenges identified—particularly in terms of funding, infrastructure, and staff capacity—show that long-term strategies are required. Without sufficient investment and policy support, the library risks falling behind in addressing increasingly complex information needs.

In conclusion, the strategies implemented by the North Sumatra Language Center Library demonstrate progress toward modernization. However, further improvements in financial support, technological infrastructure, and librarian competency development are essential to maximize its role as a specialized information center.

E. CONCLUSION

This study shows that the management strategy of the North Sumatra Language Center Library in meeting the information needs of library users focuses on the utilization of linguistic and literary collections, collection digitization, the application of information technology, and the improvement of information literacy. These efforts have helped to increase the accessibility and effectiveness of services, although there are still limitations in terms of funding, infrastructure, and human resources.

Overall, the library has taken the first steps toward modernizing its services by integrating traditional and digital information sources. However, to achieve better optimization, institutional support, strengthening of technological infrastructure, and continuous development of librarian competencies are needed.

The results of this study are expected to serve as a reference for other special library managers in designing information management strategies that are in line with the characteristics of their institutions, as well as contributing to the improvement of information literacy and the development of linguistic research at the regional level.

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