

Collection Availability and Visiting Interest at Magelang City Public Library: Holdings and User Perceptions

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DOI: 10.30742/tb.v10i2.5787

Received: 11 August 2026

Revised: 13 September 2026

Accepted: 22 September 2026

ABSTRACT

Research Objective. This study examines the relationship between collection availability and visiting interest at Magelang City Public Library. It also asks whether a large collection is matched by users' experience of finding the materials and information they need. **Research Method.** A cross-sectional correlational survey involved 99 library users selected through purposive sampling. Questionnaire data were supported by non-participant observation and institutional records on collections and recorded visits. **Data Analysis.** Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, and simple linear regression. Additional checks examined whether the main relationship remained stable when regression assumptions, potentially overlapping questionnaire items, and influential cases were considered. **Results.** The library documented 48,329 titles and 70,662 copies. Collection quantity had the lowest mean among the three collection-availability groupings ($M = 2.87$), while the statement that needed information was always available received $M = 2.77$. Collection availability was strongly and positively related to the visiting-interest score ($r = .777$, $p < .001$; $R^2 = .603$). The relationship remained substantial after three outcome items that also referred directly to collections were removed ($r = .762$) and after five influential cases were excluded ($r = .720$). **Conclusions.** Users who rated collection availability more positively also tended to report stronger visiting interest. However, the cross-sectional design and purposive sampling do not establish causality. The findings support collection development that considers relevance, currency, number of copies, physical condition, ease of finding materials, and user needs alongside collection size. The study contributes by considering documented collection size and users' perceptions of collection availability as complementary evidence in interpreting the collection-visiting relationship.

Keywords: Collection Availability; Collection Development; Visiting Interest; Public Library; User-Centered Evaluation

A. INTRODUCTION

Public libraries support access to information, learning, recreation, cultural participation, and community life. The IFLA-UNESCO Public Library Manifesto 2022 places lifelong learning and access to information at the center of the public library's mission (International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions [IFLA] & UNESCO, 2022). This role also connects naturally with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 on learning opportunities and Target 16.10 on public access to information (United Nations, 2015). Recent Indonesian work likewise shows that public library services need to respond to diverse community

information needs to support broader development priorities (Widiyawati et al., 2026). The connection is practical rather than symbolic: access has value only when people can find information that is relevant, current, usable, and suited to their needs. For this reason, the quality of a public library collection cannot be judged from its size alone.

Collection development is a continuing process of understanding user needs, selecting resources, reviewing gaps, updating materials, and removing items that no longer serve the collection well. Indonesian studies highlight the value of using user-generated evidence and actual usage patterns, including for public and digital collections (Cahyani & Perdana, 2022; Mauk & Sau, 2025; Qonita & Syahri, 2025). A public library needs assessment likewise helps connect resources and services to community needs (Shin et al., 2022). International work emphasizes continuing evaluation, balance, resource constraints, and efficient provision of information resources (Kamau & Elegwa, 2022; Lewis et al., 2022). This literature points to two related but different questions: how much a library owns, and whether users can actually find and use what they need.

Visiting interest is shaped by more than collections. People may come to a library to seek information, read, study, use facilities, attend programs, or spend time in a comfortable public space. Aini et al. (2024) show that public-library visits involve information, people, and place. Nabila et al. (2024) separate public-space quality, service quality, satisfaction, and revisit intention, whereas Hidayatullah and Rahman (2025) discuss visiting interest alongside collections, services, facilities, and user expectations. A recent study also linked facility use with visiting decisions (Sayidah & Damaris, 2026). These findings do not diminish the importance of collections; they situate collections within a broader library experience.

Earlier Indonesian studies found positive relationships between collection availability and visiting interest in school and municipal libraries (Hastoro & Rumani, 2016; Palilingan et al., 2023). These studies provide an important baseline, but repeating the same relationship in another location would add little on its own. Recent collection-evaluation work also shows the value of considering several indicators together rather than relying on a single overall score (Ivanka et al., 2026). The gap addressed here is therefore how the collection-visiting relationship should be interpreted when documented holdings, user perceptions, and field conditions do not fully align.

Magelang City Public Library provides a useful setting for this question. Institutional records show a substantial collection, both printed and electronic. At the same time, field observations during the study period identified several practical concerns, including some older materials, light-to-moderate physical damage, books not always in the expected call-number order, and information needs that were not readily met. These observations do not show that the whole collection has the same problems. They do, however, raise a relevant LIS question: can a library hold many titles and copies while users still face gaps in finding particular materials? Reading institutional records, user responses, and field observations together offers a fuller view than relying on holdings or survey scores alone.

Collection availability is examined through collection type/diversity, quantity, and quality. Visiting interest is examined through curiosity, the library environment, and need-related motives, following the instrument adapted from Sutarno (2018, 2020) and Hastoro and Rumani (2016). The visiting-interest items also cover programs, environment, information needs, recreation, and several collection-related perceptions. The total score is therefore interpreted as a broad measure of factors related to interest in visiting. At the same time, all three analytical groupings are reported to retain the instrument's full range.

The study addresses three questions: (1) how users evaluate collection availability and the different aspects of visiting interest; (2) whether collection availability is associated with the visiting-interest score; and (3) how collection records and field observations help explain the survey pattern. H1 proposes a positive association between collection availability and visiting interest. The contribution is to interpret this association by reading documented holdings and users' evaluations of collection availability together, while keeping wider conditions of public-library use in view.

B. METHODS

This study used a cross-sectional quantitative correlational design at the Magelang City Library and Archives Service, Central Java, Indonesia. Data were collected from 18 February to 31 March 2026. Institutional records showed 10,075 recorded visits from October to December 2025: 3,188 in October, 3,247 in November, and 3,640 in December. These numbers describe visit events, not verified unique individuals. In this article, they are used to describe the service context rather than as a sampling frame of 10,075 different users.

The study involved 99 respondents selected through purposive sampling. The target sample size of 99 was obtained by applying Slovin's formula with a 10% error parameter to the 10,075 recorded visit events (98.99, rounded to 99). Because these records represent visit events rather than verified unique individuals, and recruitment was non-probability-based, the figure was used only as an operational recruitment target. Participants were eligible if they had visited the library or used its collections, were at least 15 years old, and agreed to complete the questionnaire. The questionnaire was administered through Google Forms during the field period, with access provided via a QR code and a link circulated by library staff via WhatsApp. The findings, therefore, represent participating users and should not be treated as population estimates for all residents of Magelang or all library users.

The questionnaire ([Supplementary File](#)) used a four-point Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree). Collection availability comprised 13 items grouped into collection type/diversity, quantity, and quality. Visiting interest consisted of 15 items grouped as curiosity, library environment, and need-related motives. These groupings are used as the instrument's analytical categories. They are interpreted descriptively rather than as factor-validated subscales because several items cross conceptual boundaries. Because Y2, Y10, and Y14 also refer directly to collections, the total visiting-interest score is interpreted as a broad

composite measure, and this overlap is taken into account when assessing its association with collection availability.

All items exceeded the item-total correlation criterion used in the original analysis ($r = .198$). Internal consistency was high for collection availability (Cronbach's $\alpha = .870$) and visiting interest ($\alpha = .928$). These values support score consistency in this sample but do not establish construct validity. Descriptive statistics summarized respondent characteristics and the means of items and dimensions. Pearson correlation and simple linear regression were the primary tests used to assess the relationship. Item-level data were rechecked during article preparation to confirm the reported totals and main estimates.

Additional checks tested the stability of the main relationship. Because the regression residuals showed unequal variance (Breusch-Pagan $p = .011$), HC3 robust standard errors were used for the slope (Hayes & Cai, 2007). Three visiting-interest items that directly referred to collections (Y2, Y10, and Y14) were then removed to test the effect of overlapping content. Cook's distance was used to identify influential observations (Cook, 1977), and the analysis was repeated without cases above the $4/n$ threshold. Spearman correlation provided a non-parametric comparison. These checks assess robustness; they do not make the design causal.

Non-participant observation was recorded using an observation sheet and covered visible collection diversity and condition, shelving order, accessibility, reading space, programs, and patterns observed during the field period. Institutional documents comprised recorded-visit reports covering October-December 2025 and the 2025 collection report covering printed and electronic holdings. These sources were used to give context to the questionnaire findings and to note where the evidence agreed or differed. Observation was not designed as a representative shelf- or condition audit, so visible problems are reported as contextual observations rather than estimates of the entire collection. The questionnaire stated that participation was voluntary and responses would be kept confidential. Names were collected in the original form, but the analytical dataset used for this article was de-identified.

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Respondent and collection context

The sample was concentrated among younger users, with 83.8% aged 15-25 years. This profile matters because the results mainly reflect younger active users rather than the full age range served by a municipal public library. Demographic and institutional details are summarized in Table 1. The printed collection covered Dewey Decimal Classification classes 000-900.

Table 1. Respondent and institutional context

Indicator	Result
Respondents	99
Women	71 (71.7%)
Men	28 (28.3%)

Indicator	Result
Age 15-25 years	83 (83.8%)
Printed collection	43,734 titles; 63,757 copies
E-book collection	4,595 titles; 6,905 copies
Total collection	48,329 titles; 70,662 copies
Recorded visits, Oct-Dec 2025	10,075 visit events

Note. The 10,075 recorded visits are visit events, not verified unique users.

Perceived collection availability

Users did not evaluate all parts of collection availability in the same way. The quantity grouping was the lowest of the three collection-availability groupings, while the item stating that needed information was always available was also comparatively low (Table 2). Under the original interpretation scheme, these scores still fall in the positive range, but the differences between them are more informative than simply calling every result 'high.' Users can view the collection as broadly diverse while still experiencing gaps in particular materials, subjects, or copies.

This pattern shows why collection size and collection adequacy should not be treated as the same thing. Documented holdings describe the scale of the collection, whereas user ratings reflect perceived collection availability; the two provide complementary information for evaluation. A library can hold many titles and copies, but still have too few copies of popular books, outdated materials in some subjects, weak coverage of particular needs, or difficulty finding items. Studies of information needs and collection development consistently point to these practical issues. Atikuzzaman et al. (2025), for example, identified limited copies, catalog difficulties, and perceived resource shortages as barriers to information access. User needs assessment and ongoing collection review help libraries identify gaps that total holdings cannot reveal (Mauk & Sau, 2025; Shin et al., 2022). Recent Indonesian collection-development research also stresses the need for regular evaluation rather than treating collection building as a one-time activity (Putra et al., 2025). For digital and hybrid collections, user feedback and use data are likewise important (Lewis et al., 2022; Qonita & Syahri, 2025).

Field observation provided a useful but limited context for this pattern. Some materials appeared outdated, some covers showed light-to-moderate damage, and several books were not in the expected call-number order. At the same time, respondents rated the overall quality grouping relatively positively. This difference should not be turned into an unsupported claim about what users 'really' value. The quality grouping combines content-related and physical-condition items, while the observation was not a systematic audit of the whole collection. The safer conclusion is that survey perceptions and visible collection conditions do not fully overlap. For collection management, this supports regular attention to relevance,

currency, number of copies, repair, weeding, and shelving accuracy, rather than relying on total holdings as the primary indicator of adequacy.

Visiting interest: curiosity, environment, and need-related motives

The three visiting interest groupings also showed different patterns. Environment- and need-related motives were rated more positively than curiosity-related items; the changed spatial arrangement item was the lowest-rated diagnostic item, while the reading-place and boredom-reduction items were among the highest (Table 2). The pattern suggests that users value the library not only for information seeking but also as a place for reading, comfort, and recreation.

This pattern aligns with research that treats library visits as part of a broader user experience. Aini et al. (2024) found that information access interacts with people- and place-related factors during public library visits. Nabila et al. (2024) separate public-space quality, service quality, satisfaction, and revisit intention, while Hidayatullah and Rahman (2025) place visiting interest within a combination of collections, services, facilities, and user expectations. Recent evidence also links facilities with visiting decisions (Sayidah & Damaris, 2026). The present instrument is broader than these differentiated models because it combines several motives and conditions into a single measure of visiting interest. The three groupings are therefore used to describe the pattern in the original instrument, not as separate validated psychological constructs. The descriptive results across these dimensions are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2. Dimension means and selected diagnostic item means

Variable / dimension	Mean	Selected item	Item mean
Collection availability - type/diversity	3.15	Needed information is always available	2.77
Collection availability - quantity	2.87	Collection meets user needs	2.85
Collection availability - quality	3.14	Book covers are in good condition	3.05
Visiting interest - curiosity	3.03	Changed spatial arrangement encourages revisit	2.63
Visiting interest - environment	3.38	Library provides a place to read	3.47
Visiting interest - need-related motives	3.39	Library can reduce boredom	3.48

Note. Dimension labels follow the original instrument and are presented descriptively; they were not established through factor analysis in this study.

Association between collection availability and visiting interest

The primary analysis showed a strong positive relationship between collection availability and the visiting-interest score ($r = .777$, $p < .001$, $n = 99$). The fitted regression accounted for 60.3% of the variation in the questionnaire outcome; full model and robust inference statistics are shown in Table 3. The result supports H1 for this sample: users who gave higher scores to collection availability also tended to give higher scores to visiting interest. It does not mean that collections caused 60.3% of actual library visits.

The additional checks showed that the main pattern did not depend on one analytical choice. Removing three visiting-interest items that also referred directly to collections left a substantial correlation ($r = .762$, $p < .001$), while the influence and Spearman checks remained positive (Table 3). The association remained substantial after the overlapping items were removed, suggesting that it was not solely dependent on those three items; however, this does not establish construct independence. The exact size of the association should therefore be interpreted cautiously.

The positive direction is consistent with earlier Indonesian studies linking collection availability and visiting interest (Hastoro & Rumani, 2016; Palilingan et al., 2023) and aligns with recent evidence that facilities can also influence visiting decisions (Sayidah & Damaris, 2026). Effect sizes should not be compared mechanically because settings, samples, and instruments differ. The contribution here is to read the association together with collection records, survey patterns, and field observations. In Magelang, favorable views of the collection were accompanied by favorable views of the environment and need-related functions. Collections are important, but they are not a complete explanation of why people visit.

Reading the survey together with the collection records and observation makes the practical message more specific. The library already has a large collection, so a general recommendation to 'add more books' would be too broad. More useful actions include regular user needs assessment, analysis of circulation and requests, additional copies of high-demand materials, updating older subject areas, systematic weeding and repair, and accurate shelving. Evidence-based and patron-informed collection approaches support this kind of targeted decision making (Lewis et al., 2022; Mauk & Sau, 2025; Qonita & Syahri, 2025; Rhanoui et al., 2022). The aim is not simply to increase holdings, but to make the collection more relevant and easier to use.

Table 3. Primary association, regression diagnostics, and robustness checks

Statistic	Value
Primary Pearson correlation	$r = .777$; 95% CI [.684, .845]; $p < .001$; $n = 99$
Spearman sensitivity	$\rho = .674$; $p < .001$
OLS model fit	$R^2 = .603$; adjusted $R^2 = .599$; $F(1, 97) = 147.368$
OLS slope	$B = 1.004$

Statistic	Value
HC3 robust slope inference	SE = .140; 95% CI [.727, 1.281]; $p < .001$
Outcome-overlap sensitivity	$r = .762$; $p < .001$ (Y2, Y10, Y14 removed)
Influence sensitivity	$r = .720$; $R^2 = .519$; $n = 94$ (five Cook's-D cases removed)

Note. Sensitivity analyses were used to test the stability of the main pattern; the primary analysis remains the full-sample Pearson correlation and simple regression.

Implications for collection development and public-library services

Collection development should also be connected with how people use the library. Environment and need-related motives received higher means than curiosity-related items, suggesting that users experience the library as both an information institution and a public place. Users may come to read, study, use the facilities, or spend time in a comfortable space, then engage with the collection during the same visit. This creates practical opportunities for displays, recommendations, thematic programs, and digital discovery tools that connect spaces and services with information resources. The study did not test whether these strategies increase visits, so they remain service-design implications rather than causal conclusions.

A user-centered collection strategy also supports libraries' wider public role. When relevant and current information is easier to find, collection management supports the library's everyday work in learning and public access to information. These functions are consistent with SDG 4 and Target 16.10 (United Nations, 2015), and Widiyawati et al. (2026) similarly show that public library services need to respond to diverse community information needs. This study does not measure SDG achievement; rather, it shows how practical collection decisions can strengthen the conditions through which public libraries provide access to information and learning resources.

Reflexive interpretation and limitations

Several limits define what can be concluded. Purposive recruitment limits statistical generalization, and 83.8% of respondents were aged 15-25 years. The findings, therefore, reflect the experiences of participating users, especially younger active users, more strongly than those of the full population served by the library. The 10,075 figure refers to recorded visits rather than unique users, and the cross-sectional design does not establish the direction of influence.

Measurement is another limitation. Both main scores came from the same questionnaire, so that common method variance may have contributed to the observed association. The visiting-interest measure is broader than a pure intention scale, and some outcome items refer directly to collections. Removing three overlapping items did not eliminate the association, but this sensitivity check does not rule out shared-method bias or validate the overall construct. High Cronbach's alpha values show internal consistency; they do not replace construct validation or comparison with actual behavior.

The observation was contextual rather than a systematic audit, so visible problems with currency, physical condition, or shelving cannot be generalized to the entire collection. Future studies could use more representative sampling where feasible, validate clearer, more distinct measures of collection adequacy and of visit or revisit intention, and reduce shared-method dependence by separating predictor and outcome measurement or by combining perceptions with circulation, reservation, request, failed-search, and digital-use records. Longitudinal work could also examine whether changes follow changes in the availability of collection in use.

D. CONCLUSION

Taken together, the findings answer all three research questions. For RQ1, users evaluated collection availability unevenly, with quantity rated lower than the other collection groupings. In contrast, environment and need-related motives were rated more positively than curiosity-related aspects of visiting interest. For RQ2, collection availability was strongly and positively associated with the visiting-interest score, and the positive direction remained substantial in the sensitivity checks. For RQ3, institutional records and field observations contextualized the survey pattern: substantial holdings coexisted with some gaps in meeting information needs and visible issues in currency, condition, and shelving. These conclusions are limited by the cross-sectional, purposively sampled design and the broad self-report measure of visiting interest.

Conceptually, documented holdings and users' evaluations of collection availability provide complementary rather than interchangeable evidence for collection evaluation. For practice, this supports evidence-based collection development focused on user needs, demand, number of copies, updating, repair, and weeding, as well as accurate shelving, rather than indiscriminate expansion.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The authors used ChatGPT (OpenAI) solely to assist with English translation and language proofreading. All AI-assisted outputs were critically reviewed, verified, and revised by the authors. ChatGPT was not used for data collection or for generating research findings. The authors take full responsibility for the accuracy, interpretation, arguments, and final content of the manuscript.

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