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Library Users' Perceptions of Social Inclusion-Based Library Programs in the West Sumatra Provincial Archives and Library Service

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Abstract

Social inclusion-based library programs have been developed to strengthen libraries as spaces for learning, community empowerment, and equitable information access. However, their implementation continues to face challenges related to promotion, information dissemination, program continuity, and user participation, making evaluation from users' perspectives essential. This study aimed to describe users' perceptions of the social inclusion-based library program implemented at the Regional Archives and Library Office of West Sumatra Province. A quantitative approach with a descriptive method was employed. The study population consisted of 474 library users, from whom 87 respondents were selected through simple random sampling. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and Likert-scale questionnaires and were analyzed using descriptive statistics through mean and grand mean calculations. The findings revealed that users' perceptions of the program were categorized as good, with an overall mean score of 3.16. The collection indicator obtained a mean score of 2.96, physical accessibility 3.21, marketing 3.16, partnership 3.18, program implementation

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3.24, and training 3.26. These results indicate that the program positively supports information access, service accessibility, activity communication, collaborative engagement, program implementation, and users' skills development. The study concludes that social inclusion-based library programs contribute positively to expanding learning opportunities and supporting community empowerment. These findings contribute to the literature on inclusive library services and provide practical implications for strengthening collection development, promotional strategies, partnerships, and service quality to improve the effectiveness and sustainability of social inclusion-based library programs.

Keywords: Community Empowerment; Inclusive Library Services; Library User Perception; Skills Development; Social Inclusion-Based Library

INTRODUCTION

Public libraries have experienced a significant transformation in their institutional role in response to rapid social, technological, and informational developments. Traditionally, libraries functioned primarily as repositories of knowledge and providers of information resources; however, contemporary public libraries are increasingly expected to become centers of learning, community empowerment, and lifelong education that actively contribute to social welfare and community development (Mahdi, 2020). This transformation reflects the growing expectation that libraries should not merely provide access to information but should also facilitate social participation, improve literacy, and strengthen community capacities through inclusive and participatory services (Sari et al., 2025). Within this context, the concept of social inclusion-based libraries has emerged as an important approach to redefining library services and expanding their societal contribution. The development of public libraries toward socially inclusive institutions is strongly associated with efforts to eliminate barriers to information access and promote equal participation for individuals from diverse social, cultural, and economic backgrounds. A public library is expected to provide opportunities for every member of society to access information, participate in educational activities, and improve personal competencies without discrimination (Suryadi, 2022). Consequently, libraries are no longer positioned solely as information providers but are increasingly viewed as community-oriented institutions that support social development and improve citizens' quality of life through educational and empowerment-oriented initiatives (Azizah, 2025).

The growing significance of social inclusion in library services reflects a broader understanding that access to information alone is insufficient to support social development. Communities also require practical competencies, empowerment opportunities, and supportive learning environments that enable individuals to transform information into meaningful social and economic benefits (Sabriyanti & Batubara, 2023). In this regard, social inclusion emphasizes equal opportunities, community participation, and collaborative engagement that encourage individuals to become active contributors within society rather than passive recipients of information (Yuliasih & Rachmatullah, 2025). The implementation of social inclusion in public libraries has been observed in various countries through programs that integrate learning, creativity, and practical skills development. In several North American public libraries, makerspace programs have been developed to provide technology training, creativity workshops, and collaborative learning opportunities designed to empower communities and strengthen public participation in library activities (Lakind et al., 2019). Similar developments are evident in libraries that organize robotics training, digital literacy programs, and skill-development workshops aimed at helping users improve practical competencies relevant to everyday life (Wang et al., 2016). These developments indicate that public libraries increasingly function as community-centered institutions capable of supporting both intellectual and practical learning.

The movement toward socially inclusive libraries has also gained considerable momentum in Indonesia through the implementation of the Social Inclusion-Based Library Transformation Program initiated by the Perpustakaan Nasional Republik Indonesia. Since its introduction in 2018, the program has sought to strengthen library functions by expanding community access to information, supporting skill development, and encouraging libraries to become centers of empowerment that respond directly to local societal needs (Perpustakaan Nasional Republik Indonesia, 2023). The implementation of this transformation further reflects governmental recognition that libraries have the potential to contribute meaningfully to community welfare when supported by relevant programs and sustainable institutional development. The transformation agenda is institutionally reinforced through regulatory support that emphasizes the importance of socially inclusive services in strengthening the societal role of libraries. The implementation of social inclusion-based library services aims to increase community welfare through access to information, educational opportunities, literacy development, and practical

training programs tailored to local needs (Fansuri & Batubara, 2024). Accordingly, libraries are expected to function not only as centers for reading and information retrieval but also as spaces where individuals acquire competencies that improve their social and economic resilience (Nurjannah & Yuliza, 2023).

The role of libraries in fostering social empowerment has become increasingly important in a rapidly changing society characterized by technological advancement, labor market transformation, and growing informational complexity. Public libraries are expected to adapt to these societal shifts by creating services that support community learning, encourage participation, and reduce barriers to accessing opportunities for self-development (Husna & Yusufhin, 2024). Such expectations require libraries to design innovative service models that move beyond conventional collections and prioritize practical, participatory, and community-oriented programs. Within the Indonesian context, the implementation of social inclusion-based library services has also been adopted by regional public libraries, including provincial institutions responsible for library and archival services. One example is the implementation of social inclusion-based programs by the Dinas Kearsipan dan Perpustakaan Provinsi Sumatera Barat, which seeks to expand the role of public libraries through community-oriented activities and skill-development programs. These programs are intended to support users in developing practical competencies, enhancing literacy, and improving access to information relevant to daily life and socioeconomic development.

The social inclusion-based programs conducted in the institution include various educational and practical learning activities, such as acrylic craft training, bouquet-making classes, English language classes, Japanese language classes, sewing workshops, knitting activities, and health- and beauty-related sessions. These programs reflect a substantial shift in library orientation, demonstrating that libraries increasingly provide spaces for creativity, social interaction, informal education, and practical skill acquisition rather than functioning solely as repositories of information (Cahya, 2024). Such developments suggest that libraries are becoming dynamic learning environments capable of facilitating personal growth and community empowerment simultaneously. Despite these institutional developments, the implementation of social inclusion-based library programs often encounters practical challenges that may affect their effectiveness and sustainability. The success of such programs depends not only on their availability but also on how communities perceive, access, and participate in them. Effective implementation requires

structured scheduling, adequate communication, consistent promotion, supportive facilities, and meaningful engagement between library institutions and users (Panggabean & Ali, 2024). Without these supporting elements, the intended social benefits of inclusive library services may not be fully realized.

Preliminary observations conducted within the context of this study indicate several issues associated with the implementation of social inclusion-based library programs at the provincial level. Certain activities appear to lack structured scheduling mechanisms, creating uncertainty regarding program continuity and participation opportunities. In addition, program implementation may be highly dependent on the availability of instructors, limiting consistency in service delivery and affecting user expectations regarding program accessibility. Communication regarding activities and opportunities also appears insufficiently optimized, thereby reducing awareness among library users and limiting broader participation. Another issue concerns promotional practices related to library activities and community outcomes. Limited dissemination of program information may reduce public awareness of available services and minimize opportunities for broader social engagement. Since socially inclusive libraries rely heavily on participation and interaction, ineffective communication strategies may significantly reduce program reach and limit the extent to which communities experience meaningful benefits from library services (A'yunnina & Rofifah, 2024). Therefore, institutional success cannot be measured solely through program existence but must also be assessed through community responses and user experiences.

In evaluating the effectiveness of socially inclusive libraries, the perceptions of library users constitute an essential dimension of assessment. User perception reflects how individuals interpret, experience, evaluate, and respond to services that they receive or participate in (Handoyo et al., 2021). Perception becomes especially important because it influences users' willingness to participate in activities, revisit services, and develop positive attitudes toward institutional programs. Positive perceptions may encourage sustained engagement, whereas negative perceptions may weaken participation and reduce the effectiveness of social inclusion initiatives (Hidayati & Suciati, 2020). Research on user perception further contributes to understanding whether socially inclusive library programs genuinely meet users' expectations and respond to their practical needs. Since libraries are intended to function as participatory institutions, evaluating users' experiences becomes a crucial step toward improving service quality, increasing accessibility, and strengthening

program relevance (Nazifah et al., 2020). Consequently, studies exploring users' perceptions are necessary to ensure that social inclusion-based library services achieve their intended goals and generate meaningful social outcomes.

Previous studies have discussed the implementation of social inclusion-based libraries from various perspectives, particularly regarding service transformation, community empowerment, and institutional development. Research has shown that socially inclusive library services can strengthen community literacy, support empowerment initiatives, and improve access to educational opportunities through participatory programs tailored to local needs (Komariah et al., 2021). Similarly, studies on library transformation have emphasized the strategic role of public libraries in strengthening community welfare by creating opportunities for skills development, information access, and social participation (Hamida & Sein, 2023a). Research conducted in public and regional libraries has further demonstrated that social inclusion-based programs contribute positively to community engagement and lifelong learning. Public libraries increasingly function as social institutions that facilitate educational development and practical competencies through literacy-oriented and community-centered services (Cahya, 2024). Moreover, library transformation has been understood as an effort to reposition libraries as socially responsive institutions capable of addressing societal challenges by integrating empowerment strategies into service provision (Nurjannah & Yuliza, 2023).

Several studies have also investigated the implementation of social inclusion-based services from an institutional perspective, focusing on service innovation, management practices, and program development strategies. Findings indicate that libraries implementing inclusive services tend to improve their institutional relevance by aligning library activities with community needs and increasing opportunities for public participation (Sundariyati, 2024). In a similar vein, public libraries that adopt socially inclusive approaches are considered more capable of strengthening social interaction, promoting learning experiences, and supporting personal development among users (Panggabean & Ali, 2024). Existing literature additionally suggests that inclusive library services can function as instruments of social empowerment through practical learning activities and community engagement programs. Libraries are increasingly expected to provide opportunities for citizens to acquire practical competencies that may improve economic independence, social resilience, and intellectual capacity (Fansuri & Batubara, 2024). Therefore, the transformation of libraries into socially inclusive institutions reflects a

broader shift in public expectations regarding the social role of libraries and their contribution to community development.

Although prior studies have generated valuable insights into social inclusion-based libraries, existing scholarship largely emphasizes implementation strategies, institutional management, service innovation, and the experiences of librarians or service providers. Studies commonly discuss how libraries design empowerment programs, manage inclusive services, and strengthen community participation through institutional initiatives (Ruhukail & Koerniawati, 2021). Such approaches contribute significantly to understanding organizational dimensions of library transformation but remain relatively limited in addressing how programs are perceived by library users themselves. Furthermore, studies related to social inclusion-based library transformation frequently focus on evaluating institutional performance or discussing the practical implementation of empowerment programs rather than assessing the lived experiences and subjective interpretations of users who participate in those activities (Novianti et al., 2023). As a consequence, limited empirical attention has been directed toward understanding whether users perceive inclusive programs as meaningful, accessible, relevant, and beneficial to their personal development and everyday needs.

Based on the foregoing discussion, a significant research gap can be identified in the existing literature concerning social inclusion-based libraries. While previous studies predominantly investigate institutional implementation, service management, and empowerment strategies, relatively few studies explicitly explore library users' perceptions regarding the effectiveness and relevance of social inclusion-based programs from the users' standpoint (Alodia & Rahmah, 2025). More specifically, limited attention has been given to understanding how users evaluate practical aspects of social inclusion-based activities, including accessibility, usefulness, participation opportunities, learning experiences, and perceived benefits generated by such programs. This gap is particularly important because user perception constitutes a central indicator in evaluating the success of library services. Libraries may develop innovative and inclusive programs; however, the effectiveness of such programs ultimately depends on how users experience, interpret, and evaluate their relevance to personal and social needs (Handoyo et al., 2021). Without examining user perception, assessments of socially inclusive libraries risk remaining institution-centered and may fail to capture users' actual experiences and expectations.

The importance of perception is theoretically grounded in the understanding that perception reflects an individual's interpretation, evaluation, and response toward a phenomenon or service encountered through personal experience (Andriyanti & Falikhatun, 2023). Within the library context, user perception influences attitudes toward participation, service utilization, and long-term engagement with institutional programs (Buwana, 2020). Positive perceptions may encourage sustained involvement and increased trust in library services, whereas negative perceptions may contribute to declining participation and weaker institutional relevance (Pahlevy & Hasan, 2021). In socially inclusive libraries, perception becomes especially relevant because programs are designed not only to transfer information but also to empower communities and improve quality of life through meaningful learning experiences. Accordingly, understanding how users perceive such programs provides critical insights into whether libraries successfully address practical community needs and support individual empowerment processes (Husna & Yusufhin, 2024). Evaluating user perception also enables libraries to identify barriers to participation, improve communication strategies, strengthen program relevance, and enhance service accessibility.

Novelty. The novelty of this study lies in its analytical focus on users' perceptions of social inclusion-based library programs at the provincial public library level, specifically within the context of the Dinas Kearsipan dan Perpustakaan Provinsi Sumatera Barat. Unlike previous studies that primarily focus on implementation mechanisms, librarian perspectives, or institutional transformation, this research places library users at the center of evaluation by examining how they interpret and experience social inclusion-based activities. The study therefore shifts the evaluative perspective from institutional performance toward user-centered assessment. Another element of novelty concerns the application of an inclusive library framework proposed by Kaeding and colleagues in assessing users' perceptions regarding social inclusion-based library programs. This theoretical framework conceptualizes inclusive libraries through several important dimensions, including collections, physical barriers, partnerships, programs, training, and marketing strategies, which collectively influence service accessibility and effectiveness (Kaeding et al., 2017). The framework is particularly relevant because it enables a multidimensional evaluation of socially inclusive library services from the perspective of users. The theoretical perspective adopted in this study emphasizes that socially inclusive libraries should provide equitable opportunities for access, learning, participation, and

empowerment through user-centered services and community-oriented programs (Kaeding et al., 2017). In this context, collections function as informational resources that support learning and personal development, while accessibility concerns the removal of physical barriers that may limit user participation (Santoso, 2021). Partnerships further strengthen libraries' ability to deliver relevant services through collaboration with stakeholders and communities (Almira & Yusniah, 2023).

Similarly, training and program implementation are viewed as mechanisms for enhancing practical competencies and supporting lifelong learning among users. Social inclusion-based library activities such as language training, craft workshops, sewing, knitting, and literacy-related sessions reflect broader efforts to empower communities through participatory learning opportunities (Imam et al., 2023). Marketing and communication strategies are equally important because successful implementation depends on users' awareness and understanding of available opportunities within library environments (Eviendrita, 2024). Based on these considerations, this study argues that evaluating library transformation requires not only institutional measurement but also a deeper understanding of how programs are perceived by users. Since public libraries increasingly function as empowerment institutions rather than solely information providers, user-centered evaluation becomes essential in identifying whether services successfully meet societal expectations and practical needs (Jaya, 2024). Accordingly, this study focuses on examining users' perceptions of social inclusion-based library programs implemented at the provincial level in West Sumatra. Specifically, the research seeks to understand how library users evaluate the implementation, accessibility, usefulness, and relevance of social inclusion-based programs organized by the library institution. Through this approach, the study aims to contribute theoretically to the discourse on inclusive library transformation and practically to the improvement of socially inclusive services in public libraries. Ultimately, this study is expected to provide empirical evidence regarding the extent to which social inclusion-based library programs are perceived positively by users and to offer practical recommendations for improving program quality, increasing participation, and strengthening the societal contribution of libraries as inclusive learning and empowerment institutions.

METHODS

This study employed a quantitative method with a descriptive approach to examine library users' perceptions of social inclusion–based library programs implemented at the Regional Archives and Library Service of West Sumatra Province. The quantitative approach was selected because the study focused on collecting numerical data through questionnaires and analyzing them statistically to describe users' evaluations of program implementation. The study focused on a single variable, namely social inclusion–based libraries, without examining causal relationships between independent and dependent variables. The descriptive approach enabled the research to systematically portray respondents' perceptions regarding the benefits and implementation of library programs. The research design adopted a descriptive survey model using one variable measured through indicators of social inclusion–based libraries derived from Kaeding et al. (2017). The indicators included collection, physical barriers, marketing, partnership, program, and training. These dimensions were used to assess respondents' perceptions of collection relevance, accessibility, communication of activities, institutional collaboration, program usefulness, and training benefits. Each indicator was translated into questionnaire statements to ensure measurable and systematic data collection. The study population consisted of library users who participated in social inclusion–based library programs at the Regional Archives and Library Service of West Sumatra Province, totaling 474 participants from various activities, including language, craft, sewing, knitting, and health-related classes. A sample of 87 respondents was selected using simple random sampling. The sample size was determined through the Slovin formula with a 10% margin of error, allowing each participant an equal opportunity to be selected and ensuring representative findings.

Data collection involved primary and secondary sources. Primary data were obtained through observations, interviews, and questionnaires, while secondary data were collected from books, journals, and related scholarly references. The questionnaire served as the main instrument and consisted of 24 items distributed across six indicators. Responses were measured using a four-point Likert scale: strongly agree, agree, less agree, and disagree, with scores ranging from four to one. The questionnaire was distributed through Google Forms to respondents participating in the programs. To ensure instrument quality, validity and reliability testing were conducted. Validity was tested using Karl Pearson's Product Moment correlation with SPSS 26 for Windows, where items were

considered valid if the calculated coefficient exceeded the r-table value at a 5% significance level. Results showed that all 24 questionnaire items were valid. Reliability testing employed Cronbach's Alpha, with values above 0.60 indicating reliability. The instrument achieved an alpha coefficient of 0.899, confirming strong internal consistency and dependable measurement. Data analysis employed descriptive quantitative techniques using mean and grand mean calculations to identify response tendencies. Higher mean scores indicated stronger agreement, whereas lower scores reflected weaker perceptions. To facilitate interpretation, interval scales were applied to classify responses into categories ranging from very poor to very good. This analytical approach enabled the study to provide an objective description of library users' perceptions of social inclusion–based library programs.

RESULTS

1. Validity Test

Table 1. Validity Test Results

Item	Pearson Correlation	R table	Description
P1	0.500	0,361	Valid
P2	0.609	0,361	Valid
P3	0.373	0,361	Valid
P4	0.634	0,361	Valid
P5	0.379	0,361	Valid
P6	0.503	0,361	Valid
P7	0.478	0,361	Valid
P8	0.576	0,361	Valid
P9	0.441	0,361	Valid
P10	0.709	0,361	Valid
P11	0.508	0,361	Valid
P12	0.660	0,361	Valid
P13	0.462	0,361	Valid
P14	0.609	0,361	Valid
P15	0.458	0,361	Valid
P16	0.682	0,361	Valid
P17	0.583	0,361	Valid
P18	0.592	0,361	Valid
P19	0.537	0,361	Valid
P20	0.610	0,361	Valid
P21	0.424	0,361	Valid

Item	Pearson Correlation	R table	Description
P22	0.711	0,361	Valid
P23	0.572	0,361	Valid
P24	0.577	0,361	Valid

source: Compiled by the researcher (2026)

Table 1. Validity Test Results Show that all questionnaire items are valid, as each r-count value is greater than the r-table value (0.361). The r-count values range from 0.373 to 0.711, indicating that all 24 items are appropriate and valid for measuring the research variables.

2. Reliability Test

Table 2. Reliability Test Results

Variabel	Cronbach's alpha	Description
Social Inclusion-Based Library	0,899	Reliabel

source: Compiled by the researcher (2026)

Table 2. Reliability Test Results Show that the instrument has a high level of reliability, with a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.899 across 24 items. Since the alpha value exceeds 0.70, the questionnaire is considered reliable and consistent for measuring the research variables.

3. Analysis of Social Inclusion-Based Library.

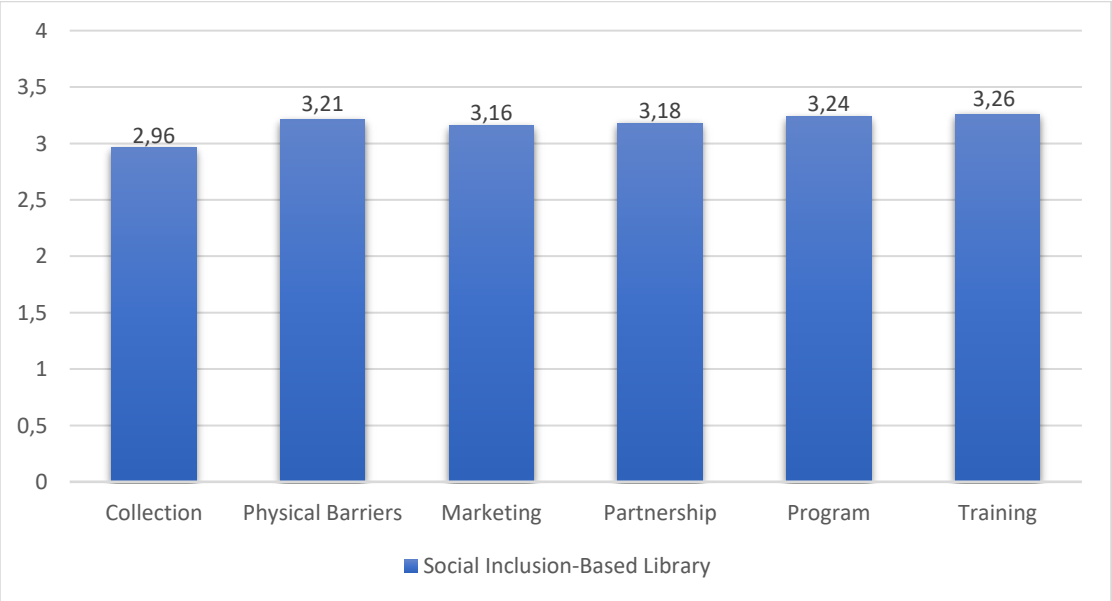

Figure 1. Social Inclusion-Based Library Indicator Scores

Figure 1. Social Inclusion-Based Library Indicator Scores Show that training has the highest average score (3.26), while collections have the lowest average score (2.96), indicating differences in respondents' perceptions across indicators.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study indicate that users' perceptions of the Social Inclusion-Based Library Program implemented at the Regional Archives and Library Office of West Sumatra Province were generally categorized as good, with an overall mean score of 3.16. This finding suggests that the implementation of the program has been positively received by library users and has demonstrated its capacity to support access to information, skills development, and community participation through various library-based activities. The results also indicate that although the implementation of the program has not yet reached an ideal level across all indicators, users generally perceive the program as relevant, beneficial, and supportive of their learning and empowerment needs. The findings reinforce the assumption that libraries are no longer perceived merely as repositories of information, but increasingly function as community learning spaces that facilitate personal development and social participation (Kaeding et al., 2017). The study employed six indicators adapted from the inclusive library model proposed by Kaeding et al. (2017), namely collection, physical barriers, marketing, partnership, program, and training. These indicators were selected to assess how users perceive the implementation of social inclusion-based library services from multiple dimensions, including accessibility, relevance, communication, and empowerment. The findings show variation across indicators, indicating that while some aspects have achieved highly positive evaluations, others still require further improvement to better align with users' expectations and needs. The variation among indicators also demonstrates that the success of social inclusion-based libraries cannot be measured solely through service availability but must also consider users' perceptions of usefulness, accessibility, and participation.

The collection indicator obtained the lowest average score among all indicators, with a mean of 2.96, although it still fell within the "good" category. This finding suggests that users generally considered the collections available at the library to be sufficiently supportive of program implementation, yet there remain opportunities for further enhancement. Respondents perceived that library materials were relatively diverse,

adequate, and applicable to the activities they attended, although several participants still expressed disagreement regarding the diversity and adequacy of resources. The relatively lower score for this indicator may indicate that collections have not fully accommodated the varying information and skill-development needs of participants engaged in different activities such as language classes, handicrafts, beauty workshops, or vocational training. The findings concerning collections are particularly meaningful because social inclusion-based libraries emphasize user-centered services that correspond to community needs. Within this context, library collections should not merely function as reading materials but also as practical learning resources that directly support empowerment programs. The higher score obtained for the statement indicating that collections could be directly used during activities suggests that users perceived the materials as functional and relevant in practice. However, the lower score regarding collection diversity implies that users may still expect broader and more specialized resources tailored to specific training themes. Such a result highlights the importance of continuous collection development aligned with program objectives and participants' interests. These findings are consistent with the argument presented by Andriyanti and Falikhatun (2023), who emphasize that service success is strongly influenced by the capacity of institutions to provide resources appropriate to user needs. Similarly, Hamida and Sein (2023) argue that social inclusion-based libraries must ensure the availability of relevant information resources to strengthen their role as learning and empowerment institutions. Therefore, the present study supports previous findings by showing that collection relevance contributes positively to user satisfaction and participation, although improvements in variety and accessibility remain necessary to maximize program effectiveness.

The physical barriers indicator received a relatively high mean score of 3.21, indicating that respondents perceived the physical environment and facilities of the library as sufficiently supportive of program participation. The indicator included accessibility to the library, supporting infrastructure, physical facilities, and environmental conditions such as lighting and air circulation. The highest score within this indicator was associated with the statement regarding library facilities facilitating participation, suggesting that respondents considered the library environment comfortable and supportive for learning activities. Conversely, the relatively lower score concerning environmental conditions may imply that some physical aspects of the environment still require improvement to enhance participant comfort. The positive perception toward physical accessibility suggests that the

library has successfully reduced barriers preventing users from engaging in activities. In social inclusion-based services, minimizing physical barriers is crucial because accessibility constitutes a prerequisite for participation. Users cannot fully benefit from empowerment programs if access to facilities is difficult or if environmental conditions are not conducive to learning. Therefore, the findings indicate that the institution has made meaningful efforts to create a physically supportive environment that encourages participation and sustained engagement. These results are in line with Rani (2024), who explains that the Transformation of Social Inclusion-Based Libraries (TPBIS) positions libraries not merely as information providers but also as empowering spaces supported by adequate facilities and comfortable environments. Likewise, Muthia and Fauziah (2024) emphasize that accessibility and user comfort are fundamental dimensions of inclusive library services because they ensure equal opportunities for participation among diverse user groups. Accordingly, the present findings reinforce the theoretical assumption that physical accessibility contributes significantly to users' positive experiences and participation in library programs.

The marketing indicator achieved a mean score of 3.16, suggesting that respondents generally perceived the dissemination of information regarding library activities as effective. Participants considered program information relatively easy to understand, sufficiently timely, and accessible through available media. Nevertheless, the indicator also revealed moderate variation among statements, particularly concerning the ease of finding information about library activities. This finding suggests that although communication mechanisms are functioning adequately, further efforts are still required to broaden the reach and visibility of promotional strategies. In the context of social inclusion-based libraries, marketing extends beyond promotional purposes and functions as a strategy to ensure equitable access to information. Effective communication enables users to become aware of available opportunities and encourages broader participation in empowerment-oriented programs. The lower score regarding information discoverability may indicate limitations in outreach mechanisms or inconsistencies in communication channels, particularly for users who rely on digital or community-based information dissemination. The findings align with studies emphasizing the importance of promotional strategies in increasing public engagement with library services. A'yunnina and Rofifah (2024) argue that library promotion through accessible and digital communication media can strengthen public awareness and increase user participation. Similarly, Eviendrita (2024) emphasizes

that strategic promotional approaches significantly contribute to library development and service utilization. Therefore, the present study supports prior evidence that marketing and communication constitute integral components of successful social inclusion-based library services.

The partnership indicator obtained a mean score of 3.18, reflecting respondents' positive perceptions toward collaborative activities involving external parties, facilitators, or resource persons. Users generally agreed that collaboration with partners enriched activities and improved learning experiences. The highest-rated statement suggested that partnerships increased activity diversity and attractiveness, indicating that users valued collaborative engagement as a means of broadening learning opportunities and practical experiences. The importance of partnerships in social inclusion-based libraries lies in their capacity to connect libraries with broader social, educational, and professional networks. Through collaboration, libraries are able to expand the range of expertise and opportunities offered to participants while simultaneously strengthening community engagement. The positive perception identified in this study suggests that respondents recognized the added value brought by partnerships, particularly in improving activity quality and relevance. These findings support Almira and Yusniah (2023), who highlight the importance of cooperation networks in strengthening library service delivery. Likewise, Komariah et al. (2021) emphasize that social inclusion-based library services depend on collaborative relationships to facilitate community empowerment and improve service sustainability. Consequently, the findings demonstrate that partnerships are not merely complementary components but essential mechanisms for expanding program quality and increasing user engagement. The program indicator achieved a mean score of 3.24, placing it within the good category and demonstrating that respondents perceived the activities organized by the library as relevant, structured, and beneficial. Among the statements measured, the clarity of activity schedules obtained the highest score, indicating that respondents appreciated organized planning and perceived scheduling transparency as an important component of successful participation. Additionally, respondents considered the activities beneficial and relatively aligned with their needs, suggesting that the program has fulfilled one of the primary objectives of social inclusion-based libraries, namely supporting lifelong learning and empowerment through community-oriented services.

The positive perception toward the program dimension suggests that the Regional Archives and Library Office of West Sumatra Province has successfully provided learning

opportunities that are meaningful to participants. Social inclusion-based library programs are intended to bridge information access with practical application by enabling users to develop competencies relevant to everyday life and socioeconomic improvement. The relatively high score for schedule clarity also demonstrates that organizational consistency contributes significantly to user trust and satisfaction. Nevertheless, the score indicating program suitability to participant needs, although categorized positively, remained slightly lower than schedule-related aspects, implying that future program development should involve a stronger needs assessment process to ensure greater alignment between activities and participant expectations. These findings correspond with Cahya (2024), who argues that community empowerment through social inclusion-based libraries depends largely on the extent to which programs address practical and contextual community needs. Similarly, Fansuri and Batubara (2024) explain that social inclusion-based library transformation aims to improve quality of life through educational and skill-development programs that are directly beneficial to society. Therefore, the findings of this study reinforce the proposition that structured, beneficial, and user-centered programming contributes significantly to positive user perceptions and sustained participation in library-based activities. Among all indicators, training obtained the highest average score, with a mean value of 3.26, and was categorized as very good. This finding is particularly significant because it demonstrates that respondents highly valued training-related dimensions, including material suitability, skills development, everyday usefulness, and clarity of instruction delivered by facilitators. Participants perceived the training materials as aligned with their needs and beneficial for improving competencies that could be applied beyond the library environment. The high evaluation of this indicator reflects the success of the program in positioning the library not only as a provider of information but also as a center for practical learning and capacity building.

The prominence of training in the findings indicates that users prioritize tangible and immediately applicable benefits derived from library participation. This observation reflects an important shift in library perception, where libraries are increasingly valued as spaces for active learning rather than passive information consumption. The training activities offered—such as language classes, handicrafts, sewing, beauty, and health-related programs—appear to have generated meaningful learning experiences because respondents recognized their practical relevance to everyday life and personal development. Such findings strengthen the understanding that empowerment-oriented library programs can

positively influence user engagement when designed according to community needs. The findings support Imam et al. (2023), who emphasize that skill-development programs enhance participants' practical competencies and contribute to empowerment outcomes. Likewise, Hamida and Sein (2023) argue that social inclusion-based libraries play a strategic role in creating a knowledge society by facilitating meaningful learning experiences through accessible and participatory educational activities. In this regard, the findings expand previous research by illustrating that users perceive training not merely as an additional service but as the most valuable component of social inclusion-based library programs.

The findings of this study generally confirm and extend prior research concerning the implementation of social inclusion-based libraries in Indonesia. For instance, Alodia and Rahmah (2025) reported positive perceptions toward the implementation of the Social Inclusion-Based Library Transformation Program in the Pasaman Regional Library, demonstrating that users tend to appreciate programs that support learning and community empowerment. Similarly, Husna and Yusufhin (2024) found that the implementation of inclusive library services contributed positively to increased community engagement and service accessibility. The current study aligns with these findings by demonstrating consistently positive perceptions across multiple indicators, including accessibility, partnerships, training, and program implementation. However, the present findings also extend previous literature by highlighting variation across dimensions of service quality. While earlier studies often focused primarily on implementation processes or institutional perspectives, this study specifically examined user perceptions and therefore provides insight into how services are experienced directly by participants. The identification of training as the strongest indicator and collections as the weakest, despite both being positively evaluated, contributes a more nuanced understanding of how different service dimensions are prioritized by users. This distinction suggests that empowerment-oriented services may generate stronger perceptions of value than conventional information-based services when evaluated from a user-centered perspective. The findings also support Kaeding et al.'s (2017) inclusive library framework, which emphasizes the importance of accessible collections, minimized physical barriers, effective partnerships, responsive programs, training opportunities, and communication strategies in supporting inclusive services. The consistency between theoretical expectations and empirical findings indicates that the indicators used remain relevant in evaluating social inclusion-based library implementation within local contexts such as West Sumatra Province.

The findings of this study generate several theoretical, practical, and methodological implications. From a theoretical perspective, the study contributes to the development of library and information science by reinforcing the concept that social inclusion-based libraries should be understood as multidimensional institutions that integrate access to information, learning opportunities, and community empowerment. The findings strengthen the applicability of Kaeding et al.'s (2017) inclusive library model in the Indonesian context and demonstrate that user perception constitutes an essential dimension in evaluating library effectiveness. Practically, the findings offer important implications for library institutions, librarians, and policymakers. First, the institution should strengthen collection development strategies to better accommodate diverse participant needs and learning interests. Since collection diversity received the lowest evaluation, libraries may consider conducting regular user-needs assessments and increasing the availability of specialized learning materials linked to specific activities. Second, promotional and communication strategies should be expanded through digital platforms, social media, and community outreach mechanisms to ensure broader access to information and increased participation. Third, training activities should remain a priority because respondents perceived them as highly beneficial and directly relevant to skill enhancement. Sustaining and diversifying practical training programs may therefore contribute significantly to strengthening the library's social role. For librarians, the findings highlight the importance of adopting user-oriented service approaches that emphasize accessibility, participation, and practical benefits. Librarians are increasingly expected to function not only as custodians of information but also as facilitators of learning, community networking, and empowerment initiatives. From a policy perspective, local governments and library management institutions should continue supporting inclusive library transformation through sustainable funding, partnership development, and capacity-building initiatives.

Methodologically, this study demonstrates the usefulness of descriptive quantitative approaches in assessing user perceptions of library services. Nevertheless, the study also suggests opportunities for methodological expansion through mixed-method or qualitative approaches to gain deeper insights into participant experiences, motivations, and expectations. Despite its contributions, the study has several limitations that should be acknowledged objectively. First, the research employed a descriptive quantitative design that focused primarily on numerical representation of perceptions, thereby limiting the

ability to explore deeper explanations behind respondents' experiences and interpretations. Second, the study relied on questionnaire data collected from 87 respondents, meaning that findings reflect the perceptions of program participants within a specific institutional context and may not be generalized to all social inclusion-based library programs. Third, the use of a single variable and a limited set of indicators may not fully capture broader dimensions influencing user participation, such as social background, motivation, digital literacy, or institutional policy factors. Nevertheless, the study contributes significantly to the literature by emphasizing users' perspectives in evaluating social inclusion-based library implementation. Unlike many prior studies focusing on institutional management or implementation processes, this study highlights how users perceive service relevance, accessibility, and empowerment outcomes. The findings therefore provide valuable evidence for evaluating and strengthening social inclusion-based library programs in Indonesia. Ultimately, the study demonstrates that libraries can function effectively as inclusive learning environments when services are designed to meet community needs, encourage participation, and support practical empowerment through accessible and meaningful activities.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that users' perceptions of the social inclusion-based library program at the Regional Archives and Library Office of West Sumatra Province are generally positive and fall within the good category. The findings indicate that the implementation of the program has been perceived as beneficial in supporting access to information, skill enhancement, and community participation through various learning and empowerment activities. This conclusion directly addresses the research objective, namely to describe users' perceptions of the implementation of a social inclusion-based library program. Across the assessed indicators, including collections, physical accessibility, marketing, partnerships, programs, and training, respondents demonstrated favorable evaluations, suggesting that the program has functioned effectively in supporting users' educational and practical needs. Training emerged as the highest-rated indicator, reflecting the relevance of learning materials and their contribution to users' skills development, while the collections indicator obtained the lowest score, although it remained within the good category, indicating the need for greater relevance and diversity of supporting resources.

The study contributes theoretically to the development of library and information science, particularly in understanding social inclusion-based libraries from the perspective of library users. Practically, the findings provide evaluative insights for library managers and policymakers in improving the effectiveness, inclusiveness, and sustainability of community-oriented library services. The results further imply that libraries should not only function as providers of information resources but also as spaces for empowerment, lifelong learning, and skills development. Therefore, strengthening program planning, improving information dissemination, enhancing partnerships, and diversifying collections are recommended to optimize user engagement and program effectiveness. Future studies are encouraged to employ broader populations, comparative institutional contexts, or mixed-method approaches to provide a more comprehensive understanding of users' experiences and the long-term impact of social inclusion-based library programs.

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