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Effectiveness of Mobile Library Services Based on the LibQUAL+™ Method at the Pariaman City Library and Archives Office

Selvia Syaheri & Elva Rahmah
Universitas Negeri Padang, Indonesia
elva@fbs.unp.ac.id; selvia.syaheri@gmail.com

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Abstract

Mobile library services play a crucial role in expanding access to information for communities with limited access to permanent library facilities. However, continuous evaluation is necessary to ensure that service quality meets users' expectations and information needs. This study aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of the mobile library service provided by the Library and Archives Office (DISPERSIP) of Pariaman City using the LIBQUAL+™ framework. A quantitative descriptive approach was employed, involving 71 respondents selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire based on the three LIBQUAL+™ dimensions: Affect of Service, Information Control, and Library as Place, and were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The findings indicate that the overall mobile library service was effective, with a mean score of 3.04. Affect of Service achieved the highest rating and was categorized as highly effective, whereas Information Control and Library as Place were classified as effective, with Information Control receiving the lowest evaluation. The study concludes that librarians' competence represents the primary strength of the service, while improvements in collection

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development and information resource management remain necessary. These findings provide practical guidance for enhancing the quality and sustainability of mobile library services.

Keywords: Information Control; LIBQUAL+™; Mobile Library; Public Library; Service Quality

INTRODUCTION

The rapid advancement of information and communication technology has transformed the ways in which people seek, access, and utilize information in their daily lives, creating both new opportunities and new challenges for library services (Ferina & Assabilla, 2024). Although digital transformation has accelerated the dissemination of knowledge, equitable access to information remains a persistent concern, particularly for communities residing in rural, remote, and geographically disadvantaged areas where permanent library facilities are unavailable or difficult to reach (Muchaonyerwa et al., 2021). Consequently, public libraries are increasingly expected to extend their services beyond conventional buildings and adopt inclusive approaches that ensure equal access to information for all members of society (Haryanto et al., 2024).

Public libraries play a fundamental role in promoting lifelong learning, strengthening information literacy, and supporting sustainable community development through the provision of accessible and reliable information resources (Abumandour, 2019). Their functions have evolved beyond merely preserving collections to becoming active institutions that facilitate education, social inclusion, and community empowerment (Mukhtar & Abdullahi, 2025). Nevertheless, the effectiveness of these functions largely depends on the ability of libraries to provide services that reach underserved populations who experience limited educational and informational infrastructure (Khomo et al., 2023). Therefore, expanding library outreach has become an essential strategy for reducing disparities in information access while encouraging reading habits among diverse community groups (Juwita et al., 2024).

One of the most practical approaches to addressing this challenge is the implementation of mobile library services, which deliver library collections directly to communities that have limited access to permanent library facilities (Ayu, 2023). Mobile

libraries function as an extension of public library services by visiting schools, villages, community centers, and other public spaces, thereby reducing geographical barriers that prevent people from obtaining quality reading materials (Andry & Rava, 2022). Beyond providing books, mobile libraries also contribute to literacy promotion by encouraging reading culture and supporting educational activities among children, students, and the general public (Hanum et al., 2025).

The importance of mobile library services is further reinforced by Indonesia's legal framework, which mandates local governments to provide library services for communities that cannot be adequately served by permanent libraries (Perpustakaan Nasional Republik Indonesia, 2013). This policy reflects the government's commitment to ensuring equal opportunities for accessing information regardless of geographical location. However, fulfilling this mandate requires not only the availability of mobile library units but also the delivery of high-quality services that effectively meet users' expectations and information needs (Nur Kahana et al., 2023).

In Pariaman City, the Library and Archives Office (DISPERSIP) has operated a mobile library service to improve literacy and expand information access across schools and villages. Despite its positive contribution to the community, several operational limitations continue to influence the quality of service delivery. The service currently relies on only one mobile library vehicle to cover a relatively large service area consisting of four districts, numerous villages, and urban neighborhoods, resulting in infrequent visitation schedules for many service locations (DISPERSIP Kota Pariaman, 2023). Such limitations reduce opportunities for sustained interaction between librarians and users while restricting the continuity of literacy programs within local communities.

In addition to operational constraints, the adequacy and relevance of library collections remain important concerns affecting service effectiveness. Previous studies have emphasized that collection quality constitutes one of the primary determinants of user satisfaction because library resources must remain relevant, current, and responsive to users' evolving information needs (Astria, 2012). Similarly, mobile library services should provide sufficient and updated collections to encourage repeated use and strengthen community engagement with reading activities (Febianti & Kuswara, 2023). When collections are limited in both quantity and diversity, users may perceive the service as less capable of supporting their educational and informational requirements (Mahmood et al., 2021).

Service effectiveness is not determined solely by the availability of collections and infrastructure but also by the competence, responsiveness, and professionalism of librarians who interact directly with users (Unyil & Pauzi, 2025). Positive communication, empathy, and reliability demonstrated by library staff significantly influence users' perceptions of service quality and their willingness to revisit library services (Pradipta, 2012). Moreover, previous research has consistently shown that customer satisfaction in public services is strongly associated with the quality of interactions between service providers and users (Mosimanegape & Olumide, 2020). Consequently, evaluating mobile library services requires a comprehensive perspective that considers both tangible resources and users' experiences throughout the service process.

Recognizing these challenges, assessing the effectiveness of mobile library services has become increasingly important for identifying strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities for continuous service improvement. An evidence-based evaluation provides valuable information for policymakers and library managers in designing strategies that enhance service quality while ensuring equitable access to information for all communities (Anhwere et al., 2023). Such evaluation is particularly relevant for regional public libraries that continue to operate under limited financial, infrastructural, and human resource capacities while striving to fulfill their public service responsibilities.

Evaluating service quality from the users' perspective has become an essential practice in library management because users are the ultimate beneficiaries of library services and the most appropriate source for assessing service performance (Parasuraman et al., 1988). A user-centered evaluation enables libraries to identify discrepancies between expected and perceived service quality while providing practical guidance for service improvement (Parasuraman et al., 1990). Within this context, the LIBQUAL+™ framework has emerged as one of the most widely adopted instruments for measuring library service quality through users' perceptions across multiple service dimensions (Association of Research Libraries, 2022).

LIBQUAL+™ was developed from the SERVQUAL model to accommodate the distinctive characteristics of library services and has been extensively implemented in various types of libraries worldwide (Cook et al., 2001). The framework evaluates library services through three fundamental dimensions: Affect of Service, which measures librarians' competence, responsiveness, empathy, and reliability; Information Control, which assesses

the accessibility, adequacy, and usability of information resources; and Library as Place, which evaluates the physical environment and facilities supporting users' learning experiences (Fatmawati, 2013). These dimensions provide a comprehensive understanding of library performance because they integrate both tangible and intangible aspects of service quality from the users' perspective (Mahendra & Nabila, 2024).

Numerous previous studies have demonstrated the applicability of LIBQUAL+™ in assessing service quality across different library settings. Research conducted in academic libraries revealed that users generally expressed positive perceptions regarding librarians' performance, while accessibility to information resources remained the dimension requiring the greatest improvement (Arsela et al., 2024). Similar findings were reported in school libraries, where service quality was considered satisfactory despite continuing challenges related to collection management and information accessibility (Amalia & Christiani, 2020). Studies conducted in higher education libraries also confirmed that LIBQUAL+™ effectively identifies service attributes that influence overall user satisfaction and institutional service quality (Anhwere et al., 2023).

International evidence further supports the effectiveness of LIBQUAL+™ as a strategic evaluation instrument. Research conducted in developing countries found that the framework successfully measures service quality while highlighting critical service gaps requiring managerial attention (Mahmood et al., 2021). Likewise, several studies have emphasized that continuous service quality assessment contributes to sustainable library development by enabling evidence-based decision-making and systematic service improvement (Fitria et al., 2024).

Despite the growing number of studies employing LIBQUAL+™, most existing research has concentrated on academic, school, or special libraries rather than mobile library services, whose operational characteristics differ considerably from those of permanent libraries (Endarti, 2022). Mobile libraries face unique challenges related to transportation, collection rotation, service coverage, and temporary service environments that cannot be adequately represented through findings derived from conventional library settings (Febianti & Kuswara, 2023). Consequently, empirical evidence concerning the effectiveness of mobile library services evaluated using LIBQUAL+™ remains relatively limited, particularly within the context of regional public libraries in Indonesia (Juwita et al., 2024).

This condition represents the primary research gap addressed by the present study. Previous investigations have predominantly examined library service quality in fixed-library environments, whereas studies focusing specifically on mobile libraries using the comprehensive LIBQUAL+™ framework remain scarce. Moreover, limited attention has been given to evaluating how the three LIBQUAL+™ dimensions interact in supporting equitable information access within regional mobile library services, especially in West Sumatra.

The novelty of this study lies in its comprehensive application of the LIBQUAL+™ framework to evaluate the effectiveness of a public mobile library service operating under real operational constraints in Pariaman City. Unlike previous studies that primarily assessed general service quality or user satisfaction, this research provides an integrated evaluation of Affect of Service, Information Control, and Library as Place within the specific context of mobile library services. The study also generates empirical evidence regarding the strengths and weaknesses of each service dimension, thereby offering practical recommendations for improving service quality and expanding equitable information access through mobile libraries.

Based on these considerations, this study aims to analyze and describe the effectiveness of the mobile library service provided by the Library and Archives Office of Pariaman City using the LIBQUAL+™ framework. The findings are expected to enrich the body of knowledge concerning mobile library service evaluation while providing evidence-based recommendations for policymakers and library managers seeking to strengthen library services that are inclusive, responsive, and sustainable.

METHODS

This study employed a quantitative descriptive approach to examine the effectiveness of the mobile library service at the Library and Archives Office (DISPERSIP) of Pariaman City. The study focused on a single variable, namely the effectiveness of mobile library services, which was evaluated using the LIBQUAL+™ framework. The research instrument was developed based on the three dimensions of LIBQUAL+™, namely Affect of Service, which measures librarians' competence and responsiveness; Information Control, which evaluates the availability and accessibility of information resources; and Library as Place, which assesses the physical facilities and service environment. These dimensions served as

the indicators for measuring service effectiveness. The population comprised 246 users of the mobile library service during the July–October 2025 period. A total of 71 respondents were selected using purposive sampling based on two criteria: residing in Pariaman City and having used the mobile library service during the study period. The sample size was determined using the Slovin formula with a 10% margin of error.

Data collection was conducted from May to June 2026 using a structured questionnaire consisting of 21 statements measured on a four-point Likert scale. The questionnaire was adapted from the LIBQUAL+™ framework to suit the context of mobile library services. Secondary data, including visitor statistics and institutional documents, were also collected to support the analysis. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics by calculating frequencies, percentages, means, medians, modes, and standard deviations. Mean scores for each indicator and dimension were then interpreted using predefined effectiveness categories to describe the overall effectiveness of the mobile library service based on the LIBQUAL+™ framework.

RESULTS

Service Effectiveness

Table 1. Overall Effectiveness of Mobile Library Services Based on LIBQUAL+™ Dimensions

Dimensi LIBQUAL+TM	Items	Mean	Category
Affect of Service (AS)	1–7	3,32	Very Effective
Information Control (IC)	8–14	2,59	Effective
Library as Place (LP)	15–21	3,21	Effective
Overall Service	1–21	3,04	Effective

source: Compiled by the researcher (2026)

Table 1. Overall Effectiveness of Mobile Library Services Based on LIBQUAL+™ Dimensions shows that the overall effectiveness of the mobile library services provided by DISPERSIP Pariaman City achieved a mean score of 3.04, indicating an Effective level of service. Among the three LIBQUAL+™ dimensions, Affect of Service recorded the highest mean score (3.32, Very Effective), followed by Library as Place (3.21, Effective), while Information Control obtained the lowest score (2.59, Effective). These findings indicate that staff performance represents the primary strength of the mobile library service, whereas collection availability and information resources remain the main aspects requiring improvement.

DISCUSSION

The findings demonstrate that the mobile library service provided by the Library and Archives Office (DISPERSIP) of Pariaman City was effective overall (M = 3.04), indicating that the service has generally met users' expectations in delivering accessible and community-oriented library services. Nevertheless, the results reveal notable variation among the three LIBQUAL+™ dimensions, suggesting that service effectiveness is not equally distributed across all aspects of service quality. Specifically, Affect of Service achieved the highest mean score (M = 3.32), followed by Library as Place (M = 3.21), whereas Information Control obtained the lowest score (M = 2.59). This disparity indicates that while interpersonal service quality has become the principal strength of the mobile library, improvements are still needed in the provision and management of information resources.

The superior performance of the Affect of Service dimension suggests that librarians play a decisive role in shaping users' perceptions of service quality. High ratings for librarians' friendliness, responsiveness, and ability to guide users in locating information indicate that positive interpersonal interactions substantially enhance users' service experiences. In the context of mobile libraries, where service duration at each location is relatively limited, effective communication and professional assistance become essential for ensuring user satisfaction. These findings support Ayu (2023), who reported that Affect of Service is the most influential dimension in determining users' perceptions of library service quality. Similarly, Unyil and Pauzi (2025) argued that librarians' responsiveness and communication skills are critical factors influencing users' overall evaluation of library services. The results also align with the LIBQUAL+™ framework developed by the Association of Research Libraries (2022), which emphasizes empathy, assurance, and responsiveness as fundamental components of high-quality library services.

Although the Information Control dimension remained within the effective category, it recorded the lowest performance among the three dimensions. This finding indicates that users were generally satisfied with librarians' assistance in accessing information but expressed concerns regarding the adequacy, currency, and organization of library collections. Several indicators associated with collection availability and relevance were categorized as less effective, suggesting that the existing collections have not fully accommodated users' diverse information needs. This condition reflects a common challenge faced by mobile libraries, whose operational capacity limits the number of materials that can be transported

during each service visit. Consequently, users' perceptions of information quality are influenced not only by librarians' assistance but also by the availability of relevant and up-to-date collections.

These findings are consistent with Endarti (2022), who emphasized that relevant and accessible collections constitute the foundation of effective library services. Likewise, Andry and Rava (2022) argued that limited vehicle capacity and budget constraints frequently restrict collection development in mobile libraries, thereby affecting users' access to information. Interestingly, despite the relatively low evaluation of collection quality, respondents gave favorable assessments to librarians' ability to help them locate books efficiently. This suggests that librarians partially compensated for collection limitations through direct assistance and personalized guidance. However, as noted by Syakirah et al. (2026), such interpersonal support should complement rather than replace systematic collection development. Sustainable improvement therefore requires continuous collection evaluation based on users' information needs instead of relying solely on librarians' service performance.

The Library as Place dimension also demonstrated positive results, indicating that respondents perceived the mobile library as a comfortable and meaningful learning environment. High scores for the attractiveness of the mobile library vehicle, its function as a community learning space, and the ease of accessing reading materials suggest that users value the service beyond its role as a book-lending facility. Instead, the mobile library has become a flexible educational space that promotes reading and lifelong learning within the community. These findings are consistent with the concept of public libraries as community learning centers and support previous research by Rifauddin and Halida (2018), which highlighted that attractive physical design and a supportive environment encourage greater public engagement with library services. Nevertheless, respondents assigned relatively lower scores to the organization of library collections, implying that improvements in collection arrangement could further enhance users' ability to retrieve information efficiently.

The variation in performance across the three LIBQUAL+™ dimensions provides important theoretical and practical implications for the evaluation of mobile library services. From a theoretical perspective, the findings reinforce the applicability of the LIBQUAL+™ framework in assessing service quality beyond conventional library settings. While LIBQUAL+™ has been widely implemented in academic and public libraries, this study

demonstrates that the framework is equally effective for evaluating mobile library services, where operational conditions differ substantially from those of permanent libraries. The results suggest that users assess service quality through an integrated consideration of librarians' competence, information accessibility, and the physical service environment, thereby supporting the multidimensional nature of LIBQUAL+™ proposed by the Association of Research Libraries (2022). Furthermore, the study contributes additional empirical evidence that, within mobile library contexts, Affect of Service exerts a greater influence on users' perceptions than the other service dimensions, a finding that is consistent with previous studies conducted by Juwita et al. (2024).

From a practical standpoint, the findings highlight several priorities for service improvement at DISPERSIP Pariaman City. Although users expressed high satisfaction with librarians' professionalism and interpersonal communication, strengthening Information Control should become a strategic priority. The relatively low scores for collection relevance, currency, and organization indicate the need for more systematic collection development based on users' information needs. Periodic collection evaluation, increased acquisition of updated reading materials, and improved collection arrangement could significantly enhance users' access to information. In addition, expanding the operational capacity of the mobile library through additional service vehicles or more frequent collection rotation may help address the limitations associated with serving a broad geographical area using a single mobile library unit. Such improvements would ensure that the quality of information resources becomes more consistent with the high standard of interpersonal services already provided by librarians.

The study also offers methodological implications. By employing a quantitative descriptive design together with the LIBQUAL+™ instrument, the research provides a practical approach for measuring mobile library service effectiveness from the users' perspective. The use of standardized service quality dimensions enables systematic comparisons across different library settings and supports evidence-based decision-making for library management. Consequently, the methodological framework adopted in this study may serve as a useful reference for future evaluations of mobile library services in other regions.

Despite these contributions, several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the study was conducted exclusively at the mobile library service operated by DISPERSIP

Pariaman City; therefore, the findings may not be fully generalizable to other mobile library systems with different operational characteristics or user populations. Second, the sample consisted of 71 respondents, selected through purposive sampling, which appropriately represented active users of the service but may not reflect the perceptions of the broader community. Third, data collection relied primarily on a structured questionnaire, meaning that the findings describe users' perceptions without exploring in greater depth the reasons underlying their evaluations. Incorporating qualitative methods, such as interviews or focus group discussions, could provide richer insights into users' experiences and expectations.

Overall, this study contributes to the growing body of literature on library service evaluation by demonstrating that the effectiveness of mobile library services depends not only on the availability of physical resources but also on the integration of competent librarians, accessible information resources, and supportive service environments. Unlike many previous studies that have primarily examined conventional library settings, this research specifically evaluates a public mobile library service using the LIBQUAL+™ framework, thereby extending its application to an outreach-based service model. The findings provide empirical evidence that interpersonal service quality remains the strongest determinant of users' positive perceptions, while information resource management continues to represent the principal area requiring improvement. Accordingly, the study offers practical recommendations for enhancing mobile library services while enriching the empirical understanding of LIBQUAL+™ implementation within the context of community-based library outreach programs.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the mobile library service provided by the Library and Archives Office (DISPERSIP) of Pariaman City is generally effective in delivering library services to the community, as reflected by the overall evaluation based on the LIBQUAL+™ framework. Among the three dimensions assessed, Affect of Service achieved the highest performance, indicating that librarians' professionalism, responsiveness, and interpersonal competence constitute the primary strengths of the service. The Library as Place dimension also demonstrated a positive evaluation, suggesting that the mobile library has successfully created a supportive learning environment and improved public access to reading materials. In contrast, Information Control obtained the lowest score, highlighting the need to improve

the relevance, currency, and organization of library collections to better accommodate users' information needs. These findings directly address the research objective by providing a comprehensive evaluation of mobile library service effectiveness from the users' perspective.

This study contributes to the literature by extending the application of the LIBQUAL+™ framework to the evaluation of mobile library services, an area that has received relatively limited empirical attention. Practically, the findings provide evidence-based recommendations for library managers and policymakers to prioritize collection development while maintaining the high quality of interpersonal services delivered by librarians. Improving information resources, expanding collection diversity, and strengthening collection management are expected to enhance the overall effectiveness of mobile library services.

Future efforts should focus on increasing the availability of up-to-date collections, improving operational capacity, and implementing regular service quality evaluations based on users' feedback. Furthermore, future studies are encouraged to employ mixed-methods or qualitative approaches and involve broader research settings to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of factors influencing the effectiveness of mobile library services in different contexts.

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