

# THE ROLE OF STATE 1 SPECIAL SCHOOL'S LIBRARY OF JAMBI CITY IN DEVELOPING INTEREST IN READING BRAILLE COLLECTIONS

Athiatul Haqqi<sup>1</sup> Nasrul Latif<sup>2</sup> Muhammad Rum<sup>3</sup> Syamsuddin<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1,2,3,4</sup>UIN Sulthan Thaha Saifuddin Jambi

<sup>1</sup>Corresponding email: [athiatulhaqqi@uinjambi.ac.id](mailto:athiatulhaqqi@uinjambi.ac.id)

**ABSTRACT** – This study aims to determine the role, obstacles and strategies of the State 1 Special School's library of Jambi City in developing interest in reading the braille collection. The method used in the study was qualitative with a descriptive approach, the data analysis methods encompassed data reduction, data presentation and conclusion drawing. The informants were selected through purposive sampling. The results obtained through research findings can be concluded that the the State 1 Special School's library of Jambi City has conducted proper efforts in developing interest in reading braille collections for visually-impaired students. The roles of the library included providing an adequate collection of textbooks and braille supporting books for visually-impaired students. The library has also implemented programs to develop interest in reading in the library, including carrying out mandatory 15 minute library visits once a month by collaborating with teachers and the library manager, implementing school literacy movements in the library and actively carrying out promotions to the classes about the importance of reading in the library.

**Keywords:** *The Role of School Library, Special School's Library, Interest in Reading, Visually-Impaired Students.*

**ABSTRAK** – Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui peran Perpustakaan SLB Negeri 1 Kota Jambi dalam mengembangkan minat baca koleksi *braille*. Metode yang digunakan dalam penelitian adalah kualitatif dengan pendekatan deskriptif, metode analisis data yaitu reduksi data, penyajian data dan kesimpulan, metode pemilihan informan yaitu *purposive sampling*. Hasil yang diperoleh melalui hasil temuan penelitian dapat disimpulkan Perpustakaan SLB Negeri 1 Kota Jambi sudah baik dalam mengembangkan minat baca koleksi *braille* bagi siswa tunanetra, adapun diantara peran perpustakaan yaitu perpustakaan sudah menyediakan koleksi buku pelajaran dan buku penunjang *braille* yang cukup memadai bagi siswa tunanetra, perpustakaan juga sudah menerapkan program-program pengembangan minat baca di perpustakaan yang diantaranya dengan melakukan wajib kunjungan perpustakaan selama 15 menit satu kali dalam satu bulan yang bekerjasama dengan guru dan pengelola perpustakaan, menerapkan gerakan literasi sekolah di perpustakaan dan perpustakaan juga aktif dalam melakukan promosi-promosi ke kelas tentang pentingnya membaca di perpustakaan.

**Kata Kunci:** *Peran Perpustakaan Sekolah, Perpustakaan Sekolah Luar Biasa, Minat Baca, Siswa Tunanetra.*

## INTRODUCTION

In this globalization era, the development of science and technology has caused human resources to be a future asset of the nation that needs to be developed. This matter is crucial in supporting and achieving national development. Reading is very essential in today's era of globalization, because through reading, one can gain deeper knowledge about something, and then analyze the aspects that have been read. This view is consistent with Law number 43 of 2007 Article 5 Paragraph 3 regarding libraries which mandates the need to cultivate and enhance a culture of reading through the development and utilization of libraries as lifelong information and learning sources, stating that "Communities with disabilities and/or physical, emotional, mental, intellectual, and/or social disorders have the right to obtain library services tailored to their abilities and limitations" (Purnamayanti, 2020).

Interest is a common word used for Indonesian term "*Minat*". Interest can be categorized as traits or attitudes that have specific tendencies or inclinations. Interest might represent motives. On the other hand, reading is a complex thinking process, consisted of some activities such as understanding written words or phrases,

interpreting read concepts and concluding them. Therefore, reading must be cultivated, especially in the education domain because this reading activity is the key to opening the window of the world, thus enhancing students' knowledge, insights, and experiences (Bafadal, 2008).

Special school's library is a library located within the special school environment and is an integral part of the existence of the special school, serving as a learning resource center that supports the achievement of the educational goals of the respective special school. Based on Law Number 4 of 1997 concerning persons with disabilities, it is stated that "Every educational institution provides equal opportunities and treatment to persons with disabilities as students in the unit, type, and level of education in accordance with the type and degree of disability".

According to Kaufman and Hallahan in Partina, individuals with visual impairments are those who have weak vision or vision accuracy of less than 6/60 after correction or those who no longer have vision. Due to these limitations in the sense of sight, the learning process for visually-impaired individuals focuses on the tactile and auditory senses. The reading ability of visually-impaired children will certainly be different from that of normal children because visually-impaired children experience abnormalities in vision, so they cannot use their vision as the main channel for reading (Damayanti, 2015).

Hartono in Fatonah explained that in accessing or using library materials, visually-impaired children utilize two senses: hearing through sound and tactile sense through braille texts or raised letters and images. Braille is a type of writing and printing specifically designed for the visually-impaired, consisting of raised dots that can be read by touch with the fingers of the visually-impaired. In this process, librarians and educators play a crucial role in providing assistance to children with special needs, including visually-impaired children, in utilizing and using braille collections correctly and effectively (Fatonah, 2010).

One effort that can develop students' reading interest is by manifesting the role of the library, especially the role of the special school library. This argument aligns with Dian Sinaga's definition of the school library's role, stating that it is useful in developing reading interest in formal education institutions at the school level. The role of the school library is highly essential and fundamental, thus, the school library is expected to support students' learning activities and facilitate teaching for teachers. The school library should also strive to provide the best possible service and be utilized by every member of the school community, thus truly becoming a center for learning resources for students and a source of teaching materials and aids for teachers (Sinaga, 2009)

State 1 Special School of Jambi City located on Sersan Muslim Street, 24 Neighbourhood, The Hok, South Jambi, is an educational institution specialized for

children with disabilities. There are several types of education levels in the State 1 Special School of Jambi City, namely Special Elementary School (SDLB), Special Middle School (SMPLB), and Special High School (SMALB). Based on the researcher's observation results, the collection owned by the library of State 1 Special School of Jambi is divided into two, namely tactile book collections and Braille book collections. The tactile book collections refer to books written using the alphabet, while the Braille collections consist of books written using raised dots (Braille).

From the researcher's observation, the State 1 Special School of Jambi City's library has a sufficiently adequate collection of Braille materials for visually-impaired students, as evidenced by the eight enrolled students. The Braille collections for visually-impaired students obtained by the researcher from the library collection data of State 1 Special School of Jambi City were 171 exemplars in total, with variations and types of Braille collection titles consisted of 126 exemplars of instructional books and 45 exemplars of supplementary materials (Braille magazines, Braille Qur'an, and Braille storybooks).

The library of State 1 Special School of Jambi City schedules mandatory library visits by providing a 15-minute compulsory visit for each class only once a month, and conducts reading development activities with an unspecified duration. The mandatory library visit program at State 1 Special School of Jambi City does not comply with the National Standards for Special School Libraries Number 11 of 2021 regarding mandatory library visit programs for special schools, which stipulates that the minimum standard for mandatory library visits should include at least one hour per class per week for fostering reading habits, along with another activity (such as storytelling, reading aloud, review sessions, spelling competitions, and reading competitions), additionally, according to the Regulation of the Head of the National Library of the Republic of Indonesia Number 10 of 2017 concerning the National Standards for Elementary School Libraries and Madrasah Ibtidaiyah, schools are required to have mandatory reading programs in the library. If the time allocations are considered, then the library of State 1 Special School of Jambi City has yet to implement the mandatory visit program for 1 hour 45 minutes of lesson time per month for Special Elementary School, 1 hour and 55 minutes of lesson time per month for Special Middle School, 2 hours and 10 minutes of lesson time per month for Special High School, and the designated time for reading development programs.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **1. The Role of School's Library**

The role in question is the location, spot, and operational position of the library. One of the main tasks of libraries wherever it is located is “The Preservation of Knowledge”, which means collecting, preserving, and developing all human knowledge or ideas from age to age. Therefore, libraries play a primary and irrefutable role in enlightening the nation, supporting national development in general, and improving the quality of education (Hamin, 2022).

According to Dian Sinaga, the role of the school library is useful in developing reading interest in formal educational institutions at the school level. The role of the school library is very essential and fundamental, thus the school library is expected to support students’ learning activities and facilitate teaching for teachers. The school library should also strive to provide the best possible service and be utilized by every member of the school community so that it truly becomes a learning resource center for students and a teaching resource center for teachers (Sinaga, 2007).

Noerhayati and Soedibyo explain that there are seven types of school library role, namely:

- a. School libraries as an educational support facility.
- b. School libraries as a means of curriculum development.
- c. School libraries as a means of the teaching-learning process.
- d. School libraries as a means of instilling and developing reading interest.
- e. School libraries as a discipline role.
- f. Reading materials in the library that serve to entertain and as a recreational facility by providing books.
- g. As a means of fulfilling the research needs of students (Soedibyo, 1988)

## **2. The Special School’s Library**

A special school library is a library located within the environment of special needs schools and is an integral part of the activities of such schools, serving as a learning resource center to support the achievement of the goals of the respective special needs education. The institution of special needs schools aims to assist learners with physical, mental, behavioral, and social disabilities to develop attitudes, knowledge, and skills as individuals and members of society to establish reciprocal relationships with the socio-cultural and natural environment, as well as to balance abilities in the world of work or participate in further education. Special needs school units are also referred to as segregation systems, which are schools managed based on disability types but vary in stages. The educational units for children with special needs range from Early Childhood Special Education (TKLB), Special Elementary School (SDLB), Special Middle School (SMPLB), Special High School (SMALB), to Special Vocational School (SMLB) (Fatonah, 2010).

### 3. Reading Interest

According to Sutarno NS, interest in reading is a high desire or deep inclination of the heart towards reading materials or library collections. The reading materials that are of interest are those that contain benefits and values that are in line with what the reader desires. With such interest, reading can become the cause of reading activities and support readers in utilizing their leisure time as best as possible (Sutarno, 2006)

The emergence of reading interest in individuals is triggered by several factors according to their character and circumstances. In general, it can be said that these factors include a high curiosity about facts, theories, principles, knowledge, and information. The second factor is the presence of an adequate physical environment, such as interesting, quality reading materials that meet their needs. Additionally, social environmental factors also play a significant role. Furthermore, the curiosity factor about information, and the principle that reading is a spiritual need are equally important triggers (Laksmi, 2006).

According to Sudarnoto Abdul Hakim, factors that inhibit and influence reading interest when associated with libraries include:

- 1) Collections that suit the users.
- 2) Level of service from library staff.
- 3) Attitude of library staff (hospitality).
- 4) Comfortable layout arrangement.
- 5) Financial factors (Hakim, 2005)

### 4. Visually-Impaired Students

The term “*Tuna Netra*” originates from the word “*Tuna*,” which means damaged or loss, and “*Netra*,” which means eyes. So, “*Tuna netra*” refers to individuals who experience damage or obstacles in their visual organs. According to the fifth edition of the Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI), “*Tuna netra*” means unable to see or blind. The Indonesian Blind Union (Pertuni) defines “*Tuna Netra*” as individuals who do not have vision at all (totally blind) to those who still have residual vision but cannot use it to read regular-sized text (12 points) under normal light conditions even with the assistance of glasses (PSIBK USD, 2016). Nakata proposed that the term “*tunanetra*” refers to individuals with a visual acuity combination of nearly less than 0.3 (60/200) or individuals with other higher functional vision impairments, meaning those who cannot or have significant difficulty reading text or illustrations even with the use of magnifying glasses. Visual acuity is measured using an international chart called the Eyesight Test (Rohani, 2020).

Someone is said to have low vision or impaired vision when their visual

acuity still allows them to use their vision in daily activities. The primary channel they utilize in learning is through visual means, aided by either doctor-recommended or non-recommended visual aids. The type of font used varies depending on the level of vision impairment and the assistive devices employed. Orientation and mobility training are necessary for low vision students to utilize their remaining vision effectively (Rahardja, 2013).

## **5. Braille Collections**

According to the Language Center as cited by Nahlisa, braille is a system and print (based on the Latin alphabet) for the visually-impaired, built in the form of codes consisting of six dots and various combinations highlighted on paper so that it can be felt (Nahlisa, 2015).

Learning media in the form of braille is highly required for the visually-impaired, as reading and writing braille are still widely used by the visually-impaired both in developed and developing countries. The manual skill of reading and writing braille remains crucial, especially when it comes to taking small notes during learning sessions where electronic devices are not feasible to carry (Sunanto, 2005).

In general, everyone needs reading materials, including visually-impaired students. Reading materials can be presented in various forms, one of which is through books. For visually-impaired children, the reading materials obtained through books must be printed using Braille letters. To determine a good and suitable Braille book for visually-impaired individuals, a Braille book certainly has specific characteristics. In short, Tarsidi in Nahlisa states the characteristics of a good Braille book expected by visually-impaired readers as follows:

- a) Interesting content.
- b) Comfortable to read text.
- c) Free from printing or spelling errors.
- d) Uses standard braille format.
- e) Not too thick.
- f) Not too heavy.
- g) Pages are easy to turn. (Nahlisa, 2015)

## **METHODOLOGY**

This study applied qualitative research method with a descriptive approach. The selection of informants in this study was done using purposive sampling method. Data collection techniques encompassed observation, interviews, and documentation. The data analysis used consists of data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. The study was conducted at the library of State 1 Special School of Jambi City located on Sersan Muslim Street, 24 Neighbourhood, The Hok Village, South

Jambi District, Jambi City, Jambi, Postal Code 36138.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### The Role Of State 1 Special School's Library of Jambi City In Developing Interest In Reading Braille Collections

Libraries, as one of the service institutions providing reading materials in schools, plays a significant role in developing students' interest in reading. In order to meet the needs of reading materials suitable for students, teachers, and users, library managers play a significant role in providing and facilitating collections according to students' reading interests, especially visually-impaired students with their physical limitations. Therefore, it requires librarians who are experts in serving the reading needs of visually-impaired students, considering that collections for the visually-impaired differ from those for other students in terms of writing and different letters.

#### a. The School Library as An Educational Facility

The library of State 1 Special School's Library in Jambi City serves as the second place after the classroom that visually-impaired students visit to support their educational needs. In this regard, the library of State 1 Special School of Jambi City has provided adequate teaching materials in accordance with the curriculum of State 1 Special School of Jambi City and reading materials according to the reading interests of visually-impaired students. This is consistent with the data on Braille collections obtained by researchers at State 1 Special School of Jambi City with a total number as follows.

No.	Education Level	Braille Collections	
		Textbooks	Supporting Books
1	Special Elementary School	33 exemplars	45 exemplars
2	Special Middle School	46 exemplars	
3	Special High School	47 exemplars	
Total		171 exemplars	

Source: Data on Braille Collections of the Library of State 1 Special School of Jambi City in 2023

#### b. The School Library as a Means of Curriculum Development

The role of the library of State 1 Special School of Jambi City as the means for curriculum developments for visually-impaired students was found quite significant as seen from the library's existence as one of the centers for learning activities and the supporting facility for developing interest in reading for visually-impaired students, namely by providing learning materials and supporting books for visually-impaired students based on the curriculum and learning systems applied in State 1 Special School of Jambi City. In addition,

the library's role as the means for curriculum development can also be seen from the mandatory visits to the library applied to visually-impaired students. This program enhances the contribution of the library of State 1 Special School of Jambi City to be more present in providing curriculum guidance for the visually-impaired students.

c. The Library as a Facility for Teaching and Learning Process

The role of the library of State 1 Special School of Jambi City as a facility for the teaching and learning process for visually-impaired students was seen from the presence of the library's role that has provided adequate collections of Braille materials and assists visually-impaired students in supporting their learning process in the classroom, where in this role the library contributes by fulfilling and completing the learning tasks of visually-impaired students through the provision of Braille collection resources and materials that are suitable for their educational needs and learning.

d. The Library's Role in Developing Reading Interest

The role of the library of State 1 Special School of Jambi City as a means of developing reading interest for visually-impaired students is crucial, as evidenced by its presence. The library of the State 1 Special School of Jambi City has implemented activities to develop reading interest in the library. These activities/roles encompass providing adequate reading materials in the library to develop the reading interest of visually-impaired students, conducting mandatory library visits, where this mandatory visit is attended by visually-impaired students and teachers for 15 minutes before the start of the learning session for one mandatory library visit per month, promoting the importance of reading in the library to the classrooms, implementing a school literacy movement in the library that is carried out in stages, namely the stage of familiarizing students with the library, the stage of developing their reading interest, and the stage of applying their learning.

e. The Disciplinary Role by the School Library

The disciplinary role of the library of State 1 Special School of Jambi City for visually-impaired students was seen from the programs implemented by the management, which have not been maximally executed, wherein the presence of only one library manager, who is also not an expert in the field of library management, hinders the implementation of the library programs and services at the library of State 1 Special School of Jambi City. Some issues included the mandatory library visit program, which does not yet meet the standard requirements for special school library visits, and the inadequately managed library facilities such as the placement of Braille book collections on shelves, which are still disorganized and not in their proper places, thus



making it difficult for visually-impaired students to find the books they need.

f. The School Library as a Recreational Facility

The role of the library of State 1 Special School of Jambi City as a recreational facility for visually-impaired students was seen significant. Despite the limited mobility of visually-impaired students, the library strives to make the available reading materials a pleasurable recreational facility for them during leisure time. This includes providing a diverse collection of braille materials such as storybooks, novels, fairy tales, and braille magazines in the library.

g. The Library as a Research Facility

The role of the library of State 1 Special School of Jambi City as a simple research facility for visually-impaired students was seen from the current facilities which have not yet fully met the needs of visually-impaired students. There are still limited supporting facilities in the library, so visually-impaired students cannot fully utilize them. This was also evident from the supporting facilities available to visually-impaired students in the library, such as assistive devices for finding resources. For example, the number of computers available for visually-impaired students was only one unit, and the computer was not usable. There was only one typewriter, which was also unusable, and their teaching aids in the library were very limited, such as the abacus, of which there are only two, seven reglets, three styluses, and only two teaching props for the visually-impaired.

## CONCLUSION

The role of the library of State 1 Special School of Jambi City in developing the interest in reading Braille collections for visually impaired students was categorized as good. The library has provided an adequate collection of textbooks and supplementary Braille books for visually impaired students. Additionally, the the library of State 1 Special School of Jambi City has implemented reading interest development programs, including mandatory library visits for 15 minutes once a month in collaboration with teachers and the library manager, implementing a school literacy movement in the library, and actively promoting the importance of reading in classrooms.

## REFERENCE

- Arnita Purnamayanti. & Aviarana Tsamarah Utami Putri. (2020). Strategi Peningkatan Minat Baca Kelompok Tunanetra melalui Media Audiobook (Studi pada SLB-A Bina Insani Bandar Lampung). *Jurnal Anuva*, 4(1), 109-117. <http://repository.lppm.unila.ac.id/21930/1/JURNAL%20ANUVA.pdf>.
- Dian Sinaga. (2009). *Mengelola Perpustakaan Sekolah*. Bandung: Bejana
- Elly Damaiwati. (2009). *karena Buku Senikmat Susu*. Surakarta: Afra Publishing.
- Hartono. (2016). *Manajemen Perpustakaan Sekolah: Menuju Perpustakaan Modern dan Professional*. Yogyakarta: Ar-Razz Media.
- Ibrahim Bafadal. (2008). *Pengelolaan Perpustakaan Sekolah*. Jakarta: Bumi Aksara
- Imas Fatonah. (2010). *Peran perpustakaan sekolah luar biasa dalam menumbuhkan kemampuan literasi informasi bagi anak tunanetra studi kasus perpustakaan sekolah luar biasa*. Skripsi. Jakarta: Universitas Islam Negeri Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta.