Evaluation of Book Collection at the Reading Community of ‘Pinjam Pustaka’

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ABSTRACT

‘Pinjam Pustaka,’ a reading community in Sorong City, Southwest Papua, has been a cornerstone for reading habits since January 2021. This study explores the essence of ‘Pinjam Pustaka,’ seeking to evaluate its book collection to ensure its relevance and suitability for readers of all ages and backgrounds. The study reveals that this reading community offers a diverse array of materials, including textbooks, encyclopedias, novels, and comics, catering to those who lack access to such resources. It also supports self-learning and non-formal education, adapting to the digital age. With its collection continuously growing through donations, ‘Pinjam Pustaka’ underscores the importance of evaluating children’s books to meet the community’s changing needs. In 2022, the reading community saw about 720 visitors, primarily children, underlining its significance in the community. A comprehensive book evaluation in 2023, involving four researchers, classified books across seven reading levels and found 1,365 books. This process revealed a balanced distribution between early and beginning readers (43%) and intermediate to advanced readers (57%), suggesting the potential for broader engagement activities. This evaluation ensures that every reader finds suitable material and paves the way for expanding the reading community’s appeal beyond its young primary audience.

Keywords: Collection development; reading community; lifelong learning; children literature

1. INTRODUCTION

The reading community in Indonesia, known as Taman Baca Masyarakat (TBM), is one of the sources of reading and learning that can be utilized by the general public (Sukaesih et al., 2022). TBMs are not just for reading but also as centers for learning, play, practice, recreation, and cultural preservation. They play a pivotal role in community life, serving as hubs for information and education, with diverse collections that bridge the gap between information sources and the knowledge-seeking community (Dwiyanteror, 2019; Santy & Husna, 2019; Zhafirah & Primadesi, 2022).
TBMs are not just for reading newspapers or magazines; they are spaces where insights and knowledge flourish. They offer diverse information sources, including books and relevant reading materials that cater to community needs. In the modern information technology era, TBMs also serve as hubs for self-learning and support non-formal education programs (Dwiyantoro, 2019; Pramudyo et al., 2018; Saepudin et al., 2018; Saepudin & Mentari, 2016). Textbooks, encyclopedias, and biographies available serve as sources of knowledge for school children who do not have access to such reading materials at home. Educational entertainment is also an integral part of the reading community or TBM. With a collection of novels, comics, and other fictional works, TBM creates a comfortable and enjoyable atmosphere, making it an ideal place for relaxation and learning (Hardi, 2022; Pramudyo et al., 2018; Rifauddin et al., 2018; Ruslan, 2020; Sujarwo, 2016).

Many reading communities in Indonesia are undeniably connected to the roles of various associations, one prominent example being the Forum TBM. According to Abdul Khak, Secretary of the Language Development and Book Agency, Ministry of Education and Culture, there were about 5,000 TBMs or reading communities spread throughout Indonesia, play a crucial role in society (Saptiyulda, 2019). At the moment, according to its website https://forumtbm.or.id/, the TBM Forum has about 2,338 TBM members with 32 regional managers (Forum TBM, 2024a; Kemenko PMK, 2024). The TBMs located in various regions (Abdillah et al., 2022; Forum TBM, 2024b). TBMs are scattered throughout Indonesia, and various exciting books can be evaluated according to readers' needs; one is Pinjam Pustaka, a reading community located in Kampung Pisang, Sorong City, Southwest Papua. The Kampung Pisang area is located in Remu Utara Sub-district. This reading corner is in a region with a diverse population of various ethnic backgrounds, so children from different ethnic groups often visit the reading park. In Remu Utara itself, Remu Utara itself covers an area of 12.92 km², with a population of approximately 20,952 inhabitants (BPS Kota Sorong, 2024). Considering that Sorong City is known as a city with heterogeneous ethnicities, cultures, and religions among its residents (Hasrianti, 2016). However, most of the population in the Remu Utara Sub-district are small traders in the traditional market. The Remu River borders this sub-district (Abu et al., 2023).

Pinjam Pustaka opened in January 2021 amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Initially offering borrowing and reading services, particularly for children, it received substantial support from BTS Army Indonesia, a group of fans of the BTS Korean boyband, who donated high-quality children's books. Initially hosted in a small living room, the growing number of visitors prompted a move in mid-2022 to a larger space in collaboration with Toki-Toki, a local clothing store. The Pinjam Pustaka is a cultural hub and a learning space for volunteers, particularly young women in Sorong, where such opportunities are scarce. Pinjam Pustaka, which has been operating since January 2021, is growing, and visitors come every weekend. On the other hand, there will be participants whenever there is an event, either online or offline. Additionally, the consistent publication of their activities on social media has impacted the number of book collections at the Pinjam Pustaka, which is constantly growing as many individuals and organizations donate books. The growth in the number of books has not been accompanied by strict record-keeping of how many books there are and what types of books are available. If the number and types of books are known, it will help the library managers formulate better development strategies for the library.

This situation calls for the evaluation of Pinjam Pustaka's book collection. It involves assessing, measuring, and observing various aspects like programs, methods, products, or human performance. It aims to determine value, effectiveness, impact, success, and compliance with established standards or criteria. According to experts, evaluation is an ongoing activity integrated into the planning process. It measures the effectiveness of current procedures and provides data to shape future guidelines and activities (Hayati, 2016). An activity that assesses a library's collection in terms of the availability of the collection and its suitability for user needs.
while also seeking to understand the strengths and weaknesses of the collection in a library (Syukrinur, 2017).

Library collection evaluation aims to assess the quality, scope, and depth of the collection, align it with the institution’s goals and programs, and stay current with changes in society, culture, and advancements in science and technology (Munisah, 2020). Collection availability assists librarians in comprehending their existing collection and serves as a foundation for future procurement policies. It enables them to assess the extent of user information needs they can meet, simplifying decision-making for future collection acquisitions. (Hanif and Krismayani, 2018). An ideal book leveling or graded book should consider students’ difficulties, needs, and abilities (Supartinah et al., 2018). The purpose of this book leveling system is to enable children to easily find books that match their reading level and the complexity of the text without requiring assistance from others. Since the books are displayed on shelves according to their level, with clearly visible labels on the book covers, children can easily find books that are guaranteed to be suitable for their reading ability (Nugroho, 2017).

Moreover, this research emphasizes the critical role of the reading community (TBM) in encouraging a love for reading, acting as a learning center, and preserving culture. By examining the book collection at Pinjam Pustaka, the study aims to show the current state of the library’s collection and how well it meets the needs of its community. This evaluation can help the founders, as well as the managers who are managing TBM in Indonesia and around the world, to know what their reading collection is. By knowing exactly and measurably what their book collections are in their TBM, they can develop better strategies for growth, ensuring the collection stays relevant, practical, and in tune with the changing needs of its users. It also highlights the need for good record-keeping and regular evaluation to improve the library’s services and impact. This also helps visitors and readers in TBM to find books more easily, making them increasingly accessible.

2. METHODS

This research employs a quantitative research methodology approach. This study aims to evaluate comprehensively the book collection, which is estimated by the volunteer reach ±2000 books in the reading community. Data from Pinjam Pustaka’s book collection is the primary source for this research. Working with three volunteers for four months, from July to December 2023, there will be 2 to 3 monthly meetings to count and map out the books in Pinjam Pustaka. In the data collection phase, the step is to conduct a comprehensive inventory to count the number of books in the reading community. The data or books will be analyzed using the book cataloging reference from the Regulation of the Head of the Education Standards, Curriculum, and Assessment Agency (BSKAP) Number 30 of 2022. This research will evaluate the children’s reading book collection using book cataloging rules that refer to the Regulation of the Head of the Education Standards, Curriculum, and Assessment Agency (BSKAP) Number 30 of 2022 (Kemristekdikti, 2022). This regulation is also one of the implementations of Law Number 3 of 2017 concerning the National Book System.
Table 1. Book cataloging based on the Regulation of the Head of the Education Standards, Curriculum, and Assessment Agency (BSKAP) Number 30 of 2022.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Font</th>
<th>Sentence</th>
<th>Words</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Pages</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Reader</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A minimum 24-point sans-serif font.</td>
<td>3 sentences up to 12 words per sentence and four paragraphs per page</td>
<td>Max. 5 words, 7 words, 9 words, Max. 12 words</td>
<td>Books for children who are just starting to learn to read, books should be simple.</td>
<td>8-24 pages</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Early</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A minimum 20-point sans-serif font.</td>
<td>5 sentences five sentences per paragraph</td>
<td>up to 12 words per sentence and four paragraphs per page</td>
<td>Books for slightly more advanced readers.</td>
<td>16-32 pages</td>
<td>B1</td>
<td>Intermediate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A minimum 16-point sans-serif font.</td>
<td>7 sentences five sentences per paragraph</td>
<td>They come in standard book sizes (A4, A5, A6, and B5) with adaptation to other sizes suitable for Level D readers.</td>
<td>Books for advanced readers.</td>
<td>24-48 page</td>
<td>B2</td>
<td>B2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A minimum 18-point sans-serif font.</td>
<td>3 sentences up to 3 sentences per paragraph</td>
<td>up to 12 words per sentence and four paragraphs per page</td>
<td>Books for this level contain single and compound sentences with diverse paragraph presentations, such as narration, description, and persuasion</td>
<td>32-48 pages</td>
<td>B3</td>
<td>B3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A minimum 20-point sans-serif font.</td>
<td>5 sentences five sentences per paragraph</td>
<td>They come in standard book sizes (A4, A5, A6, and B5) with adaptation to other sizes suitable for Level D readers.</td>
<td>Books for intermediate readers are highly varied, including anthologies of poetry, drama, short stories, novels, and comics</td>
<td></td>
<td>C</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A minimum 16-point sans-serif font.</td>
<td>7 sentences five sentences per paragraph</td>
<td>up to 12 words per sentence and four paragraphs per page</td>
<td>Books for proficient readers encompass various types with standard sizes tailored to the psychologica l needs of the readers.</td>
<td></td>
<td>D</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>A minimum 18-point sans-serif font.</td>
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<td>They come in standard book sizes (A4, A5, A6, and B5) with adaptation to other sizes suitable for Level D readers.</td>
<td>Books for proficient readers encompass various types with standard sizes tailored to the psychologica l needs of the readers.</td>
<td></td>
<td>E</td>
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</tr>
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3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Open every Saturday, Pinjam Pustaka attracts 10-15 visitors weekly, primarily children and parents. Since its inception, it has conducted 44 online and offline activities with 678 participants, received 2011 visits, and lent out 281 books. This reading community also features a collaborative book and 15 storytelling videos on its Instagram @Pinjam Pustaka, which has 3,943 followers. The evaluation of books at the Pinjam Pustaka, which lasted for six months, began in early July 2023 and concluded in early December 2023.
This evaluation process involved four researchers. Two of them had the task of carefully examining each book, assessing its physical condition, content accuracy, and relevance to readers according to the reference levels. The other two researchers played a crucial role in labeling the books with appropriate categories, such as fiction, non-fiction, educational, or reference. After the labeling process, they were also responsible for placing the books on the right shelves in the library, ensuring easy and organized access for visitors to TBM Pinjam Pustaka.

The book evaluation process involves structured steps. The first step in this process is to prepare seven different labels to classify books. Label A is intended for books suitable for early readers just beginning to explore the world of literacy. Labels B1, B2, and B3 are designed for early readers at the first, second, and third levels, each offering slightly more complex material as their reading skills improve. Label C is intended for intermediate readers who already understand reading well. D is for middle readers, encompassing books with more profound and challenging content. Finally, label E is provided for proficient readers seeking more advanced and complex reading materials.
The second step is to remove all books from the shelves and place them on the floor. This process allows us to assess each book more efficiently. The books are then examined individually, and their content and reading difficulty levels are assessed. After the initial steps of preparing the label boards and removing the books from the shelves, the researchers commence a detailed and systematic process of examining each book individually. They meticulously assess every aspect of the book, from physical condition, such as paper quality and binding strength, to content aspects, such as topic relevance, language difficulty level, and target reader age. This evaluation is essential to ensure the books are suitable for readers at each predefined level. Once the assessment is completed and the reading levels of each book are determined, the books are gathered near the relevant label board. It will help organize the books according to their reading categories. Books falling into the early reader category are placed near label A, while books for early readers at the first, second, and third levels are grouped near labels B1, B2, B3, and so forth.

Furthermore, each book is given the appropriate label. These labels include the reading level and can also encompass other information such as genre or main topic. This step makes it easier for library visitors to find the books they are looking for or discover new books that match their interests or reading needs. Finally, the carefully labeled books are placed back on the shelves. These books are repositioned strategically, ensuring that frequently sought-after books are easily accessible.

The evaluation process can generally be carried out in the established sequence, although it may be time-consuming and take approximately six months. This evaluation is a
new undertaking at Pinjam Pustaka, so it is still adapting its processes. The time-consuming aspect is aligning the readings with the reading levels and coordinating the schedules of the researchers to allow them to dedicate time together.

After six months, amidst volunteers’ busy schedules and overcoming various challenges, considering that most volunteers are students working on their final projects, the evaluation concluded in December. From an initial estimate of ±2000 books in total, it turns out that in the reading community (TBM) Pinjam Pustaka collection, ±1,365 books encompass diverse literature in both English and Indonesian. This collection comprises various genres and topics, catering to the visitors’ varied reading interests and needs. Most of these books are in good condition, indicating proper care and management of the collection by the library.

| Table 2. Findings of book quantity and reading levels |
| %       | 8% | 11% | 12% | 12% | 23% | 22% | 12% |
| Amount  | 113 | 150 | 171 | 165 | 315 | 309 | 162 |
| Level   | A   | B1  | B2  | B3  | C   | D   | E   |
| Reader  | 43% (Book for early readers) | 57% (book for intermediate to proficient readers) |

Our evaluation made several noteworthy findings about the quantity and reading levels of the books available at Pinjam Pustaka. Starting with Level A, which comprises 8% of the total collection, these books are designed for early readers who are just beginning to grasp reading skills. Level A books typically feature simple sentences and repetitive patterns, making them ideal for young children or individuals new to reading. Moving up to Level B1, which accounts for 11% of the collection, we find books that continue to support emerging readers but offer slightly more complexity in vocabulary and sentence structure. These books serve as a bridge between early readers and more intermediate-level texts, providing readers with gradual progression in their reading abilities. Level B2 books make up 12% of the collection and are tailored for readers with a basic level of proficiency. These texts offer more challenging content and may include a broader vocabulary and narrative complexity, suitable for readers comfortable with sustained reading. Similarly, Level B3 books constitute 12% of the collection and continue to build upon the foundation of Level B2 texts. These books present readers with increasingly sophisticated language and themes, encouraging deeper engagement and comprehension.

As we progress to Levels C, D, and E, which comprise 57% of the collection, we encounter texts suited for intermediate to proficient readers. These books encompass various genres and topics, from fiction to non-fiction, and are characterized by their advanced vocabulary, complex sentence structures, and nuanced themes. Readers at these levels will likely find a wealth of material that challenges and enriches their reading experience. It is closely tied to our fourth finding, highlighting that Pinjam Pustaka’s primary target readership consists of early and beginning readers. However, there is a notable presence of intermediate to advanced-level readers, with more books available for this group. This finding suggests the need for Pinjam Pustaka to consider additional activities to engage intermediate to advanced-level readers.

**Discussion**

There are four main findings regarding the books’ quantity and reading levels. Considering that the Pinjam Pustaka reading park in Sorong City positions itself as child-focused, it raises questions when the first finding of the book evaluation reveals that there are only 113 Level A books, amounting to a mere 8% of its collection. This discrepancy is curious, especially since the demand for children’s books is high, aligning with their target audience. There could be several reasons, such as the reliance on donations to acquire children’s books. Since its inception, the park has yet to receive further children’s reading material contributions. Visually, it might seem like there are many children’s books, but a closer evaluation exposes
the imbalance. On the other hand, this issue could be addressed by purchasing Level A children's books, but Pinjam Pustaka in Sorong City still needs to undertake this initiative.

It is important to note that the issue of purchasing books in Papua is closely linked to the availability of bookstores. For instance, in Sorong City, there is only one bookstore, Gramedia, which affects the high price of books. If Pinjam Pustaka wishes to acquire Level A children's books continuously, they could initiate a specific donation drive, considering their social media presence can aid in spreading this information. It should be achievable using the Pinjam Pustaka social media network, which more than 3000 followers follow.

The second interesting is that most books are at Level C, with 315 books in this category, accounting for 23% of the total collection. Doraemon comics dominate this level. There is also the Police Agent 212 comic series, which offers detective stories filled with puzzles and humor, and Donald Duck comics, providing light entertainment with characters familiar to young readers. Besides comics, there is also the Geronimo Stilton series, offering exciting adventures with educational narratives and children's encyclopedias designed to broaden their understanding of the world. The presence of these types of books is influenced by the ease of finding them, especially comics that are readily available in bookstores at relatively affordable prices. These books often become frequent donations to places like the Pinjam Pustaka.

The third finding is that this evaluation may seem easy to carry out. However, it requires consistent involvement from many individuals willing to dedicate their time and realize its importance. The six-month duration for conducting this evaluation is lengthy, primarily due to volunteers being occupied with other commitments, especially in completing their final university projects. It demands dedication and the ability to recognize the significance of the findings, which serve as the foundation for the reading park to develop itself further. Field constraints might discourage other reading parks from evaluating their reading collections. However, if done from the beginning and regularly, these difficulties can be avoided.

The fourth finding is that when dividing the book levels into two categories, namely levels A, B1, B2, and B3, designed for early and beginning readers, they constitute 599 books, accounting for 43% of the collection. Conversely, 57% of the books, totaling 786, belong to intermediate and higher reading levels, categorized as C, D, and E. The composition of these books is heavily influenced by donations, indicating that the reading park primarily receives donated books. However, the current distribution of books contradicts the assumption that Pinjam Pustaka focuses mainly on children's reading activities. In reality, most of the collection caters to intermediate and advanced readers. Therefore, Pinjam Pustaka must devise new strategies to engage readers beyond children, considering its collection offers material suitable for intermediate and advanced levels. To address this, Pinjam Pustaka could implement various strategies. These include supporting early readers while creating opportunities for intermediate and advanced readers. For instance, establishing a silent reading club or organizing group reading classes at the reading park could attract and engage readers across different proficiency levels.

4. CONCLUSION

Evaluating the Pinjam Pustaka reading community in Sorong City reveals a significant mismatch between its child-focused mission and its book collection. Despite the high demand for children's books, only 8% of the collection consists of Level A books, likely due to reliance on donations. The scarcity of bookstores in Papua, with only one in Sorong City, exacerbates the issue, leading to high book prices. Pinjam Pustaka should consider purchasing more children's books or initiating a donation drive using its social media presence to better align with its target audience. Most of the collection (23%) consists of Level C books, including popular comics and educational series. These books, often donated due to their availability and affordability, appeal to young readers who enjoy light entertainment and educational narratives.
The evaluation process requires consistent volunteer dedication, which takes six months and highlights the challenges for university student volunteers. Regular evaluations are crucial for the park’s development, ensuring a balanced and relevant book collection. There is a notable mismatch between the park’s child-focused mission and its collection: 43% for early readers and 57% for intermediate and advanced readers, reflecting donation influences. While Pinjam Pustaka has established a strong foundation as a children’s reading hub, it faces challenges in diversifying its collection and engaging a broader spectrum of readers. Enhancing the collection and developing reader-friendly activities could significantly elevate its community role.

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