Public Libraries as Incubators for Social Inclusion and Entrepreneurship for Achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) : A Progressive Transformation

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Abstract: This research aims to explore the role of public libraries as incubators of social inclusion and entrepreneurship in supporting the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This study employed a qualitative approach with a case study method, focusing on public libraries in Karanganyar Regency, Central Java, Indonesia, that have implemented social inclusion and entrepreneurship programs. The data were collected through in-depth interviews with librarians, program participants, and relevant stakeholders, as well as direct observation and program document analysis. The data analysis followed the framework proposed by Miles and Huberman, which involves a systematic approach to qualitative data analysis, including data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. The results showed that libraries functioning as entrepreneurship incubators can effectively provide platforms for business training, technology access, and network development. These programs enhanced individual's skills and knowledge and drove local economic growth by creating new businesses and increasing employment opportunities. Additionally, library social inclusion initiatives boost community participation and engagement, strengthen social cohesion, and reduce inequality. The research concludes that public libraries in Karanganyar Regency have significant potential as agents of social change by integrating social inclusion and entrepreneurship programs. To optimize this role, adequate policy support, enhanced librarian competencies, and collaboration with various stakeholders are necessary. Thus, libraries can significantly contribute to achieving the SDGs, particularly in quality education, decent work and economic growth, reduced inequalities, and partnerships for the goals.

Introduction

Access to libraries is essential for fostering lifelong learning, promoting literacy, and providing vital information resources to communities.(Bargahi et al., 2024). The library has been recognized for having a preponderant role in society since it contributes to social development, facing great challenges over time (Andrade Agudelo et al., 2023). The productive and substantive role of libraries have been acknowledged through the ages, and every generation has seen some developments coming through by modernization of operations of the public library system (Chatterjee et al., 2023). The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) acknowledges libraries as crucial allies in promoting inclusive and sustainable development. Libraries play a key role in providing meaningful access to information, which is vital for achieving economic, social, and environmental sustainability (Wang & Chen, 2018). Public libraries are important

informational, cultural, social, and educational institutions (Liu et al., 2023). In this context, making libraries an incubator for social inclusion and entrepreneurship becomes very relevant, especially in efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Public libraries now function as more than just providers of books and information. They have transformed into community activity centers that provide access and services for all, regardless of social, economic, or cultural background. This role becomes increasingly important in the digital era, where access to information and technology can create significant gaps. By providing equal and inclusive access, libraries help reduce these disparities and encourage active participation by all members of society.

Public libraries are free, accessible, and widely trusted institutions with significant population reach (Acosta et al., 2023). Libraries are crucial, along with educational institutions, to improving education in society and producing excellent scholars, leaders, academics, researchers, and government officials (Jabeen et al., 2024). Public libraries are often celebrated as one of the last sources for education freely available to all in local communities (Oh & Mon, 2024). Public libraries have long been recognized as important and trusted sources of information, resources, and community services (Stanifer et al., 2024). Public libraries are educational institutions that contribute to a country's economic productivity through literacy, numeracy, general education, and computer and technology-related services and programs (Liu et al., 2023). However, in an ever-changing context and increasingly complex challenges, libraries are faced with demands to continuously adapt and expand their role as agents of social inclusion, especially in the context of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set by the United Nations. The UN 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda is a global plan to fight poverty, uphold equality and justice, and achieve sustainable development for all countries (Ma & Ko, 2022).

SDGs are a global and national commitment to improve society, including 17 international goals and targets for 2030, which were declared by both developed and developing countries at the UN General Assembly in September 2015 (Bappenas, n.d.). The SDGs aim to address broader issues related to economic, social, and environmental sustainability. Their targets include ending poverty and hunger, improving well-being, health, education, gender equality, access to affordable and clean energy, decent work and economic growth, sustainable and safe communities, climate action, and biodiversity conservation (Kumari & Singh, 2023). The SDGs stand out for being the first endeavor to truly integrate the three pillars of sustainable development–economic, social, and environmental–into a unified framework (Bogers et al., 2022). The SDGs provide a global framework for creating a more just, inclusive, sustainable world. Among the 17 goals, social inclusion is a top priority, ensuring that all individuals, especially the vulnerable and marginalized, have equal access to the resources and opportunities needed to improve their quality of life. The idea of sustainable development (SD) has attracted global interest and has been widely discussed by policymakers, decision-makers and scholars (Verma & Nayak, 2024).

Figure 1. Icon SDGs (The Global Goals www.globalgoals.org)

Of the 17 achievements, most are programs that libraries throughout Indonesia promote. The program is known as Social Inclusion-Based Library Transformation. The concept of social inclusion first emerged in the 1970s in France as a response to the welfare crisis in European countries. This concept then spread throughout Europe throughout the 1980s and 1990s. On March 6-12, 1995, a World Summit For Social Development High-Level Conference was held in Copenhagen, Denmark, later known as the Copenhagen Declaration On Social Development. At this meeting in Copenhagen, world leaders promised to tackle poverty and promote a stable, safe, and fair society as the primary goal of development.

After being applied to libraries, this term became a national development agenda called Social Inclusion-Based Library Transformation in the library sector. The Ministry of National Development Planning/Bapenas also ratified this policy in 2018. In 2019, Bapenas gave libraries a target to carry out social inclusion-based activities in 300 locations with a budget of 145 billion rupiah plus DAK of 300 billion. All types of libraries need to be socially, environmentally, and economically sustainable to be available for future generations (Khalid et al., 2021).

Nowadays, economic growth and national competitiveness are closely correlated with the development of information society (Balina, 2014). Public libraries have been acknowledged for their vital role as reliable providers of information, resources, and community support. Modern information organizations, particularly public libraries, have long left behind their roles as a warehouse of books and answerers of questions (Hicks et al., 2020). Libraries face a variety of challenges related to changes in practices, services, and user expectations and behavior (Cigarini et al., 2021). They serve as accessible hubs for various communities, and their significance is increasingly acknowledged in the health sector. Public health professionals are beginning to see public libraries as valuable allies in addressing community health issues(Stanifer et al., 2024). Public libraries are not just spaces for providing services, sociality, interaction, and social infrastructure but also play an essential role in the atmosphere of a city (Peterson, 2023a). Public libraries are developing makerspace services, where libraries provide tools, training, programs, and space for the community to share tools and ideas, be creative, and build skills (Crawford Barniskis, 2023). Public libraries are crucial everyday spaces for many women. Different spatial arrangements and design decisions put in place here make it possible to accommodate and support women's various activities and needs of libraries as micro urban spaces.(Peterson, 2023b) Public libraries have adopted innovative services that increase the value of services by promoting new ideas, technologies, and resources (Syn et al., 2023). In this context, libraries are essential in achieving the SDGs, especially in supporting social inclusion. Seventeen Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are outlined in "Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development". Translating the SDGs into regional policy strategies and initiatives is now increasingly urgent. It requires governance mechanisms at the local level based on shared understanding and shared frameworks among local authorities (Yamasaki & Yamada, 2022). However, libraries face several challenges that must be overcome in implementing social inclusion programs, especially in vulnerable and marginalized communities. These challenges include physical and digital accessibility, diversity of collections, staff training, financial support, and strong partnerships with various stakeholders.

Social inclusion library programs can provide the resources, knowledge, networks, and support needed to overcome challenges and create a sustainable positive impact for the communities served by libraries. The Library Bill of Rights has affirmed a commitment to diversification and inclusiveness of its organizations, services, and collections. (Macaulay,

2023) They were implementing social inclusion programs in public libraries. To understand the fundamental role and impact of the Library Social Inclusion Program in achieving the SDGs, it is necessary to conduct an in-depth study of its effectiveness and relevance. Therefore, this research aims to explore the role of public libraries as incubators of social inclusion and entrepreneurship in supporting the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Through this investigation, it is hoped that we can gain deeper insight into how the Library Social Inclusion Program can be an effective tool in responding to sustainable development challenges at the local level, as well as formulating recommendations and strategic steps to increase its positive impact on society. It is hoped that this research will not only provide a better understanding of the complexities and challenges in promoting social inclusion through libraries but will also produce practical recommendations for enhancing the role of libraries as powerful agents of social change. By strengthening partnerships and adopting an integrated, collaborative approach, we believe libraries can be a significant catalyst in achieving the SDGs and creating a more inclusive and sustainable world for all.

Research Method

This research used a qualitative approach with a case study method. The research subjects were PIC program librarians and the Karanganyar Regency Library and Archives Service community members. The data collection was done through interviews, observations, and document studies or collecting data from related documents such as activity reports, policy documents, or related literature to understand the background and framework of the library's social inclusion program and its relationship with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The data analysis used the Miles and Huberman approach involved a structured methodology for organizing, understanding, and interpreting qualitative data (Miles et al., 2014). This process is systematic and includes the following steps: Data Collection and Organization, Data Reduction, Data Display, Conclusion, Drawing and Verification.

Results and Discussion

The Library Social Inclusion Program in Karanganyar Regency significantly contributes to local economic growth by providing platforms for business training, technology access, and network development. This finding aligns with the concept of libraries as economic enablers, as discussed by Aabo (2005), who emphasizes the economic value of public libraries in supporting local economies. By offering entrepreneurship training and resources, libraries help individuals develop the skills necessary to start and grow their businesses, thereby stimulating local economic development and creating employment opportunities (Aabo, 2005).

Access to technology and digital literacy are critical components of economic empowerment in the modern economy. The findings indicate that the Library Social Inclusion Program enhances technology access by equipping libraries with computers, internet connectivity, and digital tools. This aligns with the concept of digital inclusion, which is essential for economic participation in the 21st century. According to Bertot, Jaeger, and McClure (2008), libraries play a crucial role in bridging the digital divide by providing access to technology and digital literacy training. By offering these resources, libraries in Karanganyar Regency help individuals acquire the digital skills needed for the contemporary job market and entrepreneurial ventures (Bertot et al., 2008).

The program also facilitates network development, allowing aspiring entrepreneurs to connect with mentors, peers, and potential business partners. Networking is a crucial element of business success, as it provides access to advice, resources, and opportunities that can help entrepreneurs grow their ventures. According to research by Coleman (1988), social capital, which includes networking and relationships, is vital for economic success. Libraries serve as community hubs where individuals can build social capital, thereby enhancing their economic prospects (Coleman, 1988).

The research revealed that the Library Social Inclusion Program helps reduce social inequalities by providing equitable access to educational and economic resources. This finding was supported by the concept of social inclusion, which aims to ensure that all individuals, particularly marginalized groups, have access to opportunities and resources. According to Varheim (2014), libraries contribute to social inclusion by offering services that empower disadvantaged populations. By targeting marginalized groups and promoting inclusivity, the program addresses SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities), helping to bridge socio-economic gaps and promote social cohesion (Varheim, 2014).

The research underscored the importance of partnerships and collaboration in enhancing the effectiveness of library programs. The Library Social Inclusion Program in Karanganyar Regency had successfully partnered with local businesses, NGOs, and educational institutions to expand its reach and impact. This finding aligned with SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals), which emphasizes the need for multi-stakeholder partnerships in achieving sustainable development. According to Kranich (2001), partnerships enable libraries to leverage additional resources and expertise, thereby enhancing their services and extending their benefits to the community (Kranich, 2001).

The implementation of social inclusion programs at the Library and Archives of Karanganyar Regency in Central Java exemplifies a concerted effort to transform libraries into vibrant community hubs that promote equitable access to information, education, and economic opportunities. These programs are designed to reach out to diverse segments of the population, including marginalized and vulnerable groups, ensuring that everyone can benefit from the library's resources and services.

One of the cornerstone initiatives is the literacy and education program, which includes digital literacy workshops, reading sessions for children, and adult education classes. The digital literacy workshops aim to equip community members with essential skills to navigate the digital world, thereby bridging the digital divide. These workshops cover basic computer skills, internet usage, and social media literacy, targeting older adults and those with limited access to technology. For children, interactive reading sessions and storytelling events are organized to foster a love for reading and to enhance their cognitive and language skills. Adult education classes focus on providing basic education and skill development for those who may have missed out on formal schooling.

The library has also prioritized services for vulnerable groups such as the elderly, individuals with disabilities, and economically disadvantaged families. For the elderly, the library provides tailored programs that include book delivery services, large print books, and audiobooks, ensuring that they remain engaged and informed. For individuals with disabilities, the library has implemented accessibility features such as ramps, tactile paths, and dedicated computer stations with assistive technologies. Additionally, the library collaborates with local NGOs and community organizations to offer support services and resources tailored to the needs of these groups.

To extend its reach to remote and underserved areas, the Karanganyar Library operates mobile library services. These mobile units travel to rural villages, providing access

to books, educational materials, and digital resources. The mobile library service is particularly crucial in areas where access to educational facilities and libraries is limited. By bringing the library to these communities, the mobile units help to promote literacy and lifelong learning, while also serving as a community gathering point.

A public library was very personally important and significant a place where "common people" tradesmen, workers, and farmers could come and educate themselves with the books in the library's collection (Schwartz, 2024). The library's role extends beyond providing access to information; it also actively engages in community empowerment. This includes organizing workshops and training sessions on various topics such as entrepreneurship, financial literacy, health awareness, and vocational skills. These initiatives are designed to equip community members with the knowledge and skills necessary to improve their livelihoods and achieve economic independence. For example, entrepreneurship training might cover business planning, marketing strategies, and financial management, providing participants with the tools to start and grow their own businesses.

The successful implementation of these social inclusion programs relies heavily on collaboration and partnerships. The library works closely with local government agencies, educational institutions, non-profit organizations, and community groups to design and deliver programs that meet the specific needs of the community. These partnerships enable the library to leverage additional resources, expertise, and networks, thereby enhancing the reach and impact of its programs.

The Karanganyar Regency Library and Archives have made various efforts to transform into a community center that is inclusive and effective for all levels of society. Social inclusion is a very relevant concept in this context, where libraries play a role as facilitators of access to information and services for vulnerable groups and the wider community. The following discusses how the Karanganyar Regency Library and Archives implement social inclusion through various programs and initiatives. These include (1) Literacy and Education Programs and (2) Services for Vulnerable Groups. (3.) Community Activities and Community Empowerment (4) Economic Empowerment Through Entrepreneurship

The Karanganyar Regency Library and Archives have taken essential steps to promote social inclusion through various programs and services focusing on literacy, education, and community empowerment. Despite the challenges, these efforts show the great potential of libraries as agents of social and economic change that can contribute significantly to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Social inclusion is an effort to ensure that all individuals, including those who are often marginalized, have equal opportunities to participate in various aspects of life. Public libraries can become centers of social inclusion by providing programs and services specifically designed for vulnerable groups such as people with disabilities, minorities, the elderly, and low-income communities. Digital literacy training, life skills workshops, and social clubs can increase social engagement and cohesion.

In the context of efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), a deep understanding of the impact and contribution of the Library Social Inclusion Program is essential. Through careful research and evaluation, various vital findings have been revealed regarding the effectiveness and relevance of this program in supporting the achievement of SDGs in Karanganyar Regency. In this section, the researcher will present the main findings identified through an in-depth analysis of the Library's Social Inclusion Program. These findings show the program's real impact and highlight critical aspects influencing its success in supporting the sustainable development agenda. After identifying relevant findings, the

next step is to investigate the implications and consequences of these findings for the Library Social Inclusion Program in Karanganyar Regency. This discussion section will explore how these findings can be understood in the broader context of efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Through a detailed discussion, various factors that influence the effectiveness of the program will be analyzed, as well as potential improvements or enhancements that can be proposed based on the findings that have been found. Apart from that, the practical implications of these findings for ongoing policies and programs will also be discussed, as well as strategic steps that can be taken to strengthen the contribution of the Library Social Inclusion Program in supporting the sustainable development agenda in Karanganyar Regency. It is hoped that the discussion of these findings will provide a more comprehensive and detailed view of the role and potential of the Library Social Inclusion Program in achieving the SDGs, as well as explore various opportunities and challenges that need to be overcome to increase the impact of this program more effectively and sustainably. Thus, it is hoped that this discussion can contribute to policy planning and implementation at the local level and encourage innovation and improvement to achieve the desired sustainable development goals. The following are the findings obtained by researchers based on data analysis:

Table 1. Contribution of the Library Social Inclusion Program to the Achievement of SDGs in the Karanganyar Regency Public Library and Archives

No	SDG	Indicator
1	Access to Education (SDG 4):	a. The library social inclusion program in Karanganyar Regency increases access to education by providing educational resources that are easily accessible to people from various backgrounds. b. Libraries are a place to learn for all groups, including children, teenagers, and adults who do not have access to formal educational resources. c. Initiatives such as literacy programs help increase literacy levels in society, which is an essential step toward achieving SDG 4.
2	Economic Empowerment (SDG 1, 8, 10):	a. Library social inclusion programs also contribute to economic empowerment by providing information and skills training access. Through various programs and seminars, the library provides the knowledge and skills necessary to increase employment and entrepreneurship opportunities in the community. b.
3	Health and Wellness (SDG 3, 10):	a. The role of libraries in providing health and wellness information helps people make better decisions regarding their lifestyle and health. Social inclusion programs can include health services such as health seminars, counseling, and health information exhibitions.
4	Poverty Alleviation (SDG 1):	By providing access to educational resources and economic information, libraries' social inclusion programs help reduce knowledge and opportunity gaps, an essential step in poverty alleviation.
5	Environmental Protection (SDG 13, 15):	a. Libraries can increase environmental awareness by providing information about environmentally friendly practices and the importance of nature conservation.

		b. Social inclusion programs can also include activities focusing on environmental conservation, such as book exchanges, reforestation, and environmental campaigns.

Based on the findings above, it can be clarified through discussion of the analysis carried out by researchers on field data as follows:

Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is the main agenda for many countries, including Karanganyar Regency. To realize this goal, the Library Social Inclusion Program implemented by the Karanganyar Regency Library and Archives Service is one of the initiatives attracting attention. In this context, exploring the impact and contribution of the Library Social Inclusion Program towards achieving the SDGs is essential. Therefore, an in-depth and comprehensive discussion is needed to understand how this program can effectively support sustainable development goals at the local level.

Through this discussion, it is hoped that a better understanding of the critical role of libraries in achieving the SDGs can be gained, as well as the identification of solutions that can be implemented to strengthen the contribution of libraries' social inclusion programs in realizing the vision of inclusive and sustainable development.

1) Collaboration with External Parties: The Karanganyar District Library and Archives Service can increase the impact of social inclusion programs by establishing partnerships with non-governmental organizations, universities, and companies to support various initiatives, including providing skills training and health services.
2) Use of Technology: Technology integration in library social inclusion programs can expand the reach and accessibility of educational and information resources for the community, especially in hard-to-reach areas.
3) Evaluation and Monitoring: It is essential to continuously monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of library social inclusion programs to ensure that sustainable development goals are achieved optimally. This can be done through surveys, case studies, and direct monitoring of program participants.
4) Advocacy and Counseling: The Karanganyar District Library and Archives Service can also play an essential role in advocating the importance of social inclusion in achieving the SDGs through outreach and public awareness campaigns.
5) Strengthening Library Infrastructure: Investments in library infrastructure, such as expanding reading rooms, increasing book collections, and improving accessibility, will increase the library's capacity to provide social inclusion services.

By continuing to develop and strengthen library social inclusion programs, the Karanganyar District Library and Archives Service can become a potent agent in achieving sustainable development goals at the local level. In discussing this research, we delve into how the role of libraries as incubators of social inclusion and entrepreneurship in the Karanganyar District Library and Archives has impacted the community and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Through a qualitative method, this study allows us to explore the experiences and perceptions of stakeholders in depth. As a result, we can see the positive impact generated by various social inclusion and entrepreneurship programs implemented by the library.

The findings of this research illustrate the multifaceted impact of the Library Social Inclusion Program in Karanganyar Regency, highlighting its contributions to economic empowerment, social inclusion, and partnership building. By providing business training, technology access, and networking opportunities, the program supports local economic growth and job creation (SDG 8). Through initiatives aimed at reducing social inequalities and fostering community engagement, it promotes social cohesion and inclusivity (SDG 10).

Additionally, the program's emphasis on partnerships and collaboration enhances its effectiveness and sustainability, aligning with SDG 17. These findings underscore the critical role of libraries in advancing sustainable development and improving the well-being of communities.

Conclusion

The results showed that libraries functioning as entrepreneurship incubators can effectively provide platforms for business training, technology access, and network development. These programs enhance individual's skills and knowledge and drive local economic growth by creating new businesses and increasing employment opportunities. Additionally, library social inclusion initiatives boost community participation and engagement, strengthen social cohesion, and reduce inequality. The research concludes that public libraries in Karanganyar Regency have significant potential as agents of social change by integrating social inclusion and entrepreneurship programs. To optimize this role, adequate policy support, enhanced librarian competencies, and collaboration with various stakeholders are necessary. Thus, libraries can significantly contribute to achieving the SDGs, particularly in quality education, decent work and economic growth, reduced inequalities, and partnerships for the goals.

Recommendation

To enhance the role of public libraries in Karanganyar Regency as hubs for social inclusion and entrepreneurship, policy makers should implement several concrete and operational recommendations. *First*, there should be a specific budget allocation to enhance library services, with an annual increase of 15% dedicated to developing entrepreneurship training programs, technology upgrades, and community engagement initiatives. *Second*, continuous professional development programs for librarians are essential; partnering with local universities and vocational training centers to offer bi-annual workshops on digital literacy, business mentorship, and community outreach will ensure librarians complete at least two training sessions per year. *Third*, upgrading technological infrastructure is crucial, equipping each library with a minimum of 10 new computers, tablets, and high-speed internet connections by the end of the next fiscal year, along with up-to-date software for business and educational purposes. *Fourth*, facilitating public-private partnerships will enhance resource sharing and program initiatives; forming a dedicated committee to establish at least three new partnerships annually with local businesses, NGOs, and educational institutions is recommended. *Fifth*, launching entrepreneurship incubation programs in three main libraries, providing workspace, mentorship, training, and access to funding opportunities, with plans to expand based on pilot success within two years, is essential. *Sixth*, implementing regular monitoring and evaluation systems by developing standardized tools and conducting quarterly assessments, including surveys and feedback sessions, will ensure continuous improvement of program offerings. Lastly, supporting community-led initiatives by launching a grant program to fund at least ten community-led projects annually and holding regular brainstorming meetings with local residents will encourage community participation and ownership. Implementing these recommendations will significantly enhance the impact of public libraries on local development and achieving the SDGs in Karanganyar Regency.

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