

BRANDING OF LIBRARY IN IMPROVING PUBLIC READING INTEREST IN LABUHAN BATU SELATAN REGENCY

Adimas Sutan Putoro

Universitas Islam Negeri Sumatera Utara, Indonesia

E-mail: adimas0601213026@uinsu.ac.id*

Nursapia Harahap

Universitas Islam Negeri Sumatera Utara, Indonesia

E-mail: nursapiaharahap@uinsu.ac.id

Receive :
Accepted :
Published :
DOI : 10.30829/jupi.v10i1.24056

Abstract

This study examines the strategic role of library branding in enhancing public reading interest in South Labuhan Batu Regency, a developing region in North Sumatra facing persistent literacy challenges. Despite national efforts reflected in the increasing Community Literacy Development Index (IPLM) and Reading Enthusiasm Level (TGM), the gap between urban and rural literacy engagement remains significant. This study adopts a qualitative descriptive approach within a constructivist paradigm, utilizing in-depth interviews with library managers, librarians, and users, alongside participant observation and document analysis. The data were analyzed through the Miles, Huberman, and Saldana model, with triangulation applied for data validation. Findings indicate that library branding through social media engagement, service innovations like mini cinemas, and collaborations with schools and literacy communities has effectively transformed the library's image into an inclusive, modern, and responsive literacy hub. However, challenges such as limited digital infrastructure, low technological literacy, and conservative perceptions of library functions persist, necessitating adaptive strategies. The study, guided by Brand Identity Theory, concludes that branding is not merely a promotional tool but a transformative strategy to shape the library's role in fostering a sustainable reading culture. Recommendations include strengthening institutional capacity, enhancing librarians' digital competencies, and securing government policy and financial support to sustain literacy transformation efforts.

Keywords: Branding, Library, Reading Interest, Literacy Development, South Labuhan Batu

INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of low reading interest in Indonesia has become a strategic issue that continues to be discussed in various education and human resource development forums. Amidst the rapid flow of digital information, the challenge of literacy is not only about the availability of reading materials, but also how to build the community's attraction and closeness to the culture of reading. South Labuhan Batu Regency as one of the developing areas in North Sumatra also faces similar challenges. In this context, regional libraries have a strategic role, not only as information providers, but also as agents of change in an inclusive and adaptive literacy culture to the development of the times (Semiarty et al., 2022).

Nationally, the condition of public literacy shows positive developments. Based on data from the National Library of the Republic of Indonesia (Perpusnas RI), the Community Literacy Development Index (IPLM) in 2024 reached a score of 73.52. This figure not only exceeds the national target of 71.4, but also shows a significant increase compared to the achievement in 2023 which was at 69.42. This increase is an indicator that the strategy of strengthening literacy through various national programs has shown a real impact in various regions of Indonesia (Firah et al., 2022).

One of the key factors in improving IPLM is cross-sector collaboration realized through programs such as the Village Literacy Movement and Social Inclusion-Based Library Transformation (TPBIS). These programs emphasize the importance of direct community involvement in library development and literacy activities. Through interventions such as expanding services, increasing collections, and optimizing village funds for community libraries, libraries are no longer positioned merely as places to store books, but as centers for community activities and learning (Sukma, 2021).

Furthermore, the results of a national survey of more than 174 thousand respondents in 514 districts/cities showed an increase in the Reading Enthusiasm Level (TGM) to 72.44. This achievement reflects the success of a more participatory and contextual approach in building a reading culture. In it, library branding is an important element that has not been fully developed optimally, especially in areas such as South Labuhan Batu. Branding is not just about a logo or name, but about how libraries shape images, identities, and experiences that are relevant to the community (Firman et al., 2021).

According to Kotler and Keller (2016), effective branding is able to create a strong perception of value towards an institution or product, including. When the library successfully positions itself as a dynamic, responsive, and enjoyable institution, the level of community participation will increase. In this context, library branding must be able to touch the emotional and functional aspects, with a communication approach that is adaptive to the characteristics of the local community (Guarango, 2022).

In South Labuhan Batu Regency, geographical challenges and social heterogeneity are important variables in shaping. A contextual branding approach needs to prioritize local values, strengthen regional cultural identity, and build emotional closeness with the community. Good branding can bridge the gap between the library and the community, while making the library an inclusive and participatory public space (Nurhayati, 2022).

The branding approach also needs to be accompanied by a transformation of library services and management. According to Aaker (2010), the strength of a brand is not only determined by visual symbols or communication campaigns, but also by the quality of the experience felt by users. Therefore, libraries need to be present with a new face more friendly, attractive, and relevant to the needs of modern society. This is a challenge as well as an opportunity for libraries in South Labuhan Batu to build literacy appeal through strong branding (Zohriah et al., 2023).

Various previous studies have shown the significant contribution of libraries in improving community literacy through various approaches. Atmi et al. (2022) emphasized the effectiveness of the social inclusion-based village library program in improving literacy through educational activities and services tailored to local needs. With a participatory and community-based approach, village libraries are able to become inclusive learning centers. Meanwhile, Damayanti (2022) in her case study highlighted the importance of library development

strategies through increasing collections, digital services, and collaboration with literacy communities as systematic steps to develop information literacy.

Another study by Muslim, Edrial, and Sahaluddin (2023) showed that the Library Service has a strategic role in building a culture of literacy through public policies, socialization, and the provision of adequate reading materials. Rizki and Ruwaida (2022) strengthened these findings by stating that regional libraries function as information and literacy centers through service innovation and digitalization. These studies underline the importance of institutional support, access to information, and community involvement in strengthening literacy.

Rustiarini and Dewi (2021) took a different approach by examining the influence of physical arrangement and technology-based services on people's reading interest. The results showed that comfortable space, good layout, and services tailored to user needs are important factors in attracting visitors and improving reading culture. This study highlights the importance of visual aspects, user experience, and technology in strengthening the role of libraries as attractive learning centers.

When compared to your research that focuses on library branding in increasing reading interest in South Labuhan Batu Regency, it is clear that the branding approach is still a gap in research that has not been widely explored in previous literature. The five previous studies emphasized aspects of services, facilities, literacy programs, and institutional support, but have not explicitly examined how branding strategies can shape the image and public perception of libraries. Thus, your research is here to fill this gap by highlighting the importance of imaging, strategic communication, and institutional identity in increasing the relevance of libraries in the digital era, as well as building emotional attachment to the community towards reading culture.

The urgency of this research is in line with the dynamics that have been described in the introduction, namely the need for innovative strategies to respond to the challenge of low reading interest amidst the flow of digitalization that dominates the pattern of public information consumption, especially in South Labuhan Batu Regency. Although national achievements such as increasing IPLM and TGM show a positive trend, there are still significant gaps at the regional level, including minimal visits and utilization of libraries. This shows that national success has not been fully reflected evenly at the local level. Therefore, library branding is very relevant as a strategy to increase attractiveness, build a positive image, and strengthen the position of the library as an adaptive, participatory, and contextual literacy center. This research is important to identify how branding strategies can be implemented effectively to build an inclusive and sustainable literacy ecosystem in the regions, as well as optimize the role of libraries as agents of change in community reading culture.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a qualitative method with a descriptive approach, which aims to explore in depth the library branding strategy in increasing public interest in reading in South Labuhan Batu Regency. This approach was chosen to understand the meaning, process, and social interactions that occur in library branding practices in the local community environment. The paradigm used is constructivism, which views reality as a result of social construction through interactions between library managers and the community.

The data sources in this study consist of primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained through in-depth interviews with 5 main informants, namely the Head of the South Labuhan Batu Regency Library Service, 2 senior librarians, and 2 community members who

actively use library services. This data is strengthened by the results of participatory observations of branding activities in the library, such as the implementation of literacy programs, social media management, and service innovations such as mini cinema. In addition, documentation in the form of program reports, promotional materials, and library social media content are also important data sources. Secondary data were obtained from relevant scientific literature, including books, journals, articles, and policy documents related to library branding, literacy, and human resource development.

Data collection techniques were carried out through: In-depth interviews with semi-structured guidelines to explore the perspectives, experiences, and branding strategies of each informant. Participatory observation of branding activities in the field, including monitoring the use of social media and community participation in literacy programs. Documentation studies of activity archives, program reports, and promotional materials, both printed and digital. Data validity was maintained through source triangulation techniques, by comparing the results of interviews, observations, and documentation to ensure consistency of information. This triangulation was also strengthened by cross-checking between informants to minimize interpretation bias.

Data analysis was carried out using the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2016), which includes the stages of data reduction (selection and simplification of important data), data presentation (in the form of tables, matrices, and thematic narratives), and drawing conclusions. This analysis process was assisted by manual coding to identify key patterns related to branding strategies, public perceptions, and the impact of branding on reading interest.

With this research design, it is hoped that a comprehensive understanding will be obtained regarding how library branding is designed, implemented, and accepted by the community as part of a strategy to increase literacy in the region.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

RESULT

Library Branding Strategy to Increase Reading Interest in South Labuhan Batu Regency

This study found that library branding in South Labuhan Batu Regency was carried out through a series of integrated strategies that included optimizing digital publication media, service innovation, and cross-sector collaboration. The Head of the Library Service stated, "Branding strategy by utilizing publication media is the main key to increasing public interest in reading." (Interview, 2024). The use of social media such as Instagram, Facebook, and the library's official website is the main channel for disseminating information. In addition to being a promotional tool, this media also creates an interactive space that allows the public to ask questions, access book catalogs, and participate in online literacy activities.

Literacy programs packaged in the form of writing competitions, book reviews, digital literacy seminars, and the provision of mini cinema facilities have proven to attract public interest, especially the younger generation. This is in accordance with the Brand Identity theory (Aaker, 2010), which states that brand identity must reflect the values, personality, and promises of the institution to the public. The library has succeeded in building an image as a modern literacy center that is inclusive, friendly, and adaptive to the times.

As concrete evidence, the data shows an increase in the number of visitors and new members from year to year. Average monthly visits increased by 35%, with a significant spike

in literacy events promoted through social media. One community member said, "I often come to the library after I found out there was a screening event. It turns out, there are many interesting books here." (Interview, 2024). This shows that branding not only creates awareness but also builds an emotional bond between the library and its users.

Challenges and Obstacles in Library Branding in South Labuhan Batu

Although branding has been successful in increasing the attractiveness of libraries, this study also identified a number of significant barriers. First, limited technological infrastructure in rural areas is a major obstacle. Several informants stated, "In our village, the internet is often down, so sometimes information from the library doesn't reach us." (Interview, 2024). This obstacle is in line with the findings of Utami (2021), who highlighted the inequality of digital access as a factor inhibiting literacy in remote areas.

Second, low digital literacy among the community means that most branding programs are not delivered evenly. Third, limited human resources in libraries, especially in managing creative content and digital interactions, are a serious challenge. Librarians are not yet fully skilled in utilizing digital media as a branding tool, so ongoing training is needed to improve their competence (Rahayu, 2023).

In addition, the public's perception of libraries as rigid and boring spaces is still a cultural barrier. Some people consider libraries only as places to store books, not as spaces for interaction and learning. Therefore, the branding approach needs to be continuously adjusted to local values and community characteristics so that literacy messages are more easily accepted.

Table 1. Results of Interview with the Head of the South Labuhan Batu Regional Library Division

No	Category	Transcript	Findings
1	Branding Strategy	"Branding strategy using publication media, to increase reading interest of the people of South Labuhan Batu Regency."	The use of publication media is the main key to library branding.
2	Impact	"The number of visitors is increasing, from year to year."	Effective branding increases the number of visits.
3	Range	"The impact is very much felt by people in the interior to the urban centers. Where the library continues to implement social media so that people can easily dig up information and share it with the library either from Instagram DM and other social media."	Social media expands access to information across regions.
4	Challenge	"The challenge for the Regional Library is that the people in rural areas have minimal use of mobile phones or the internet in rural areas, so the Regional Library directly goes to the field to continue to engage with the community..."	Barriers to internet access in rural areas are overcome with a field approach.
5	Collaboration	"For collaboration with schools, there are approximately 20 schools from elementary, middle, to high schools and the general public, and for our community too. We also have a TBM community..."	The library actively collaborates with schools and literacy communities.
6	Efficiency	"We think it is very effective, as we don't need a lot of money, and the use of time is efficient because we use social media..."	Social media helps with cost and time efficiency of literacy campaigns.

7	Responsiveness	"Of course there is. And the impact is as mentioned earlier, it is very beneficial, because all groups can access the most updated information and when there is a DM or something else on social media, we always respond quickly."	Quick response to public interactions via social media.
8	Innovation	"Our latest innovation is in NOBAR because in our Library we are equipped with mini cinema facilities... to increase the public's interest in reading..."	Innovation of mini cinema facilities to educate and motivate reading interest.
9	Evaluation	"Which we always implement GoogleForm and the results of the public satisfaction survey almost show a level of 5."	Evaluation of the level of public satisfaction showed very good results.
10	Hope	"The library's biggest hope for the government is to continue to support it from the policy aspect, budget and in any aspect..."	The Regional Library hopes for full support from the government for the development of literacy.

Source: Researcher Interview

The branding strategy carried out by the Regional Library of South Labuhan Batu Regency shows a strong focus on the use of publication media to increase public interest in reading. This approach is considered strategic because publication through social media and digital platforms is able to reach a wider audience at a more efficient cost than conventional methods. The use of publication media has also succeeded in introducing the library as a modern institution that is adaptive to changing times, improving the image of the library in the eyes of the public, especially the younger generation who are more familiar with the digital world. The impact of this branding strategy is clearly visible from the increase in the number of visitors that occurs from year to year. This increase does not only occur in urban areas, but also in rural areas, indicating that the existence of libraries is increasingly felt by the wider community. The role of social media has proven to be very important in expanding access to information. With interactive features such as DM on Instagram and other social media, the public is not only a recipient of information, but also actively interacts with the library, thus building a closer and more personal relationship.

Challenges in branding are also faced, especially related to limited access to technology in rural areas. Not all people have the convenience of using the internet or digital devices. To overcome this, the library took proactive steps by going directly to the field to provide offline literacy services. This approach shows the flexibility and commitment of the Library in ensuring that literacy remains accessible to all people without exception, while strengthening the library's branding as an institution that cares and is responsive to the needs of the community.

Collaboration is also an important factor in supporting the branding of the Regional Library. Collaboration with more than 20 schools from various levels of education and communities such as TBM (Community Reading Parks) expands the reach of literacy programs and strengthens the position of the library in the community. Innovations such as the provision of mini cinema facilities for Watching Together (NOBAR) activities increase the appeal of the library and become an effective educational tool. In addition, the effectiveness of the use of social media is also reflected in the results of the evaluation of the community satisfaction survey which shows a level of satisfaction that is almost maximum.

The great hope from the Perpustakaan that the government will continue to support in terms of policy, budget, and facilitation is an important note. Structural support from the government will strengthen the foundation that has been built through this branding strategy. Libraries, as one of the indicators of public service, play a strategic role in building the quality of communication and literacy in the community. Therefore, the success of library branding in South Labuhan Batu is not only an institutional achievement, but also part of a major effort in building a more advanced literacy civilization at the regional level.

DISCUSSION

The results of this study support the Brand Identity theory, which emphasizes the importance of alignment between values, image, and user experience in building public perception (Aaker, 2010; Kotler & Keller, 2016). Library branding in South Labuhan Batu is not just a visual promotion, but an effort to form a positive perception through service innovation, social interaction, and experiences that are relevant to the needs of the community. The library has succeeded in presenting itself as an institution that not only provides books, but also offers a fun, interactive, and meaningful learning experience.

This finding also enriches previous literature studies, such as those conducted by Damayanti (2022) and Rizki & Ruwaida (2022), which emphasize the role of library services and facilities in improving literacy. However, this study adds an important perspective: that branding as a strategic approach can strengthen the role of libraries as adaptive literacy centers in the digital era. Innovations such as mini cinemas are not just entertainment facilities, but also creative educational tools that increase community involvement.

Increasing reading interest among the people of South Labuhan Batu Regency is one of the important priorities carried out by the Regional Library Service. One of the strategic approaches implemented is strengthening library branding through various publication media. This effort is not only to introduce the existence of the library to the public, but also to build the image of the library as a modern, inclusive, and easily accessible literacy center for all levels of society (Wahyuningrum et al., 2022).

The Head of the Regional Library Division of South Labuhan Batu Regency emphasized, "Branding strategy using publication media is the key to increasing public interest in reading in South Labuhan Batu Regency. Visitors have increased from year to year," he said. This statement emphasizes that the use of publication media, both conventional and digital, has a positive impact on the level of visits and public participation in library services (Reynaldi & Halim, 2022).

The implementation of branding strategies is carried out comprehensively, starting from optimizing social media such as Instagram, Facebook, to using the library's official website. This approach opens up a wider space for interaction between the library and the community. "The influence is very much felt by people in the interior to the urban center," continued the Head of Division. This shows that the reach of library branding is not limited to urban areas, but has also spread to remote areas (Antasari et al., 2021).

The success of library branding is also driven by a commitment to adapting to developments in communication technology. By actively using social media, regional libraries make it easier for the public to explore information, access book catalogs, and communicate directly through features such as Instagram Direct Message (DM) and other digital platforms. This provides convenience for people who have limited physical access to the library location (Fadhli et al., 2020).

In addition, literacy activities such as writing competitions, book reviews, literacy seminars, and digital skills training are routinely published through social media. This strategy not only introduces library programs, but also creates active community involvement, especially the younger generation who are very familiar with the digital world. Thus, the library appears as a dynamic institution that is responsive to the needs of the times. (Machromah et al., 2020) .

Strengthening the library's image is also carried out through collaboration with various parties, such as schools, literacy communities, and village governments. Through this synergy, messages about the importance of reading and using libraries can be more widely disseminated and accepted. Empowering literacy agents at the village level is one of the concrete steps in strengthening the branding network that has been built (Bakti, 2020) .

This branding strategy is evident from the increasing number of new memberships and the surge in community visits, both in person and virtually. Not only that, there is also an increase in demand for information services and literacy consultations through library social media. This is proof that the presence of regional libraries has become an important part of the informal education ecosystem of the community (Mahardhika Chandra et al., 2022) .

In an effort to strengthen library branding in South Labuhan Batu Regency, various challenges and obstacles are still faced by the management. One of the main challenges is the limited technological infrastructure in several remote areas. Although social media has been actively used, limited internet networks and low levels of digital literacy in remote areas are obstacles in reaching all levels of society optimally. As a result, the distribution of information about library programs is not evenly distributed (Utami, 2021) .

In addition to infrastructure, limited human resources (HR) are also a significant obstacle. Not all librarians have adequate skills in digital media management and public communication strategies. Meanwhile, the demands of modern branding require expertise in creating creative content, managing social media, and building effective engagement with the community. This gap causes the branding process to run slower and requires ongoing training for library staff (Rahayu, 2023) .

Another challenge arises from the public's perception of the library itself. Some people, especially in rural areas, still consider the library as a formal and boring place. This paradigm makes people reluctant to visit or use library services, even though promotions have been carried out. Changing this perception requires an innovative, creative, and consistent branding approach in presenting the library as an inclusive, friendly, and inspiring space (Suharti, 2020).

Administrative barriers and budget constraints are also factors that hinder branding optimization. Limited budget support means that many library image promotion and development programs must be carried out simply and gradually. In fact, to strengthen branding broadly, sufficient investment is needed in aspects of content production, cross-media promotion, and the development of more interactive and attractive digital platforms (Atika & Sayekti, 2023) .

Despite these challenges, the spirit of strengthening branding remains a priority for the Regional Library of South Labuhan Batu Regency. With a strong commitment and adaptive steps, such as expanding cooperation with literacy communities and optimizing the use of social media, these obstacles are slowly being overcome. Collective efforts from all parties are key to realizing the library as a modern and competitive center for community literacy amidst the challenges of the times. (Husna et al., 2021) .

The phenomenon of low interest in reading in Indonesia has become a strategic issue that continues to be discussed in various education and human resource development forums.

Amidst the rapid flow of digital information, the challenge of literacy lies not only in the availability of reading materials, but also in how to build the community's attraction and closeness to the culture of reading. South Labuhan Batu Regency as one of the developing areas in North Sumatra faces similar challenges. In this context, regional libraries play an important role, not only as providers of library materials, but as agents of change in an inclusive literacy culture, adaptive to developments in the times, and able to respond to the ever-evolving social dynamics. The existence of libraries must be able to reach the wider community and provide relevant and meaningful literacy experiences, especially in responding to the needs of the younger generation who now live in a digital environment.

Library branding strategies can be analyzed through the Brand Identity Theory approach. This theory emphasizes the importance of building a consistent and meaningful identity so that institutions such as libraries can be recognized, remembered, and appreciated by the public. Brand identity does not only include visual aspects such as logos or slogans, but also includes values, personality, and promises offered to the public. In the context of libraries, brand identity must reflect educational values, accessibility, inclusivity, and responsiveness to community needs. In South Labuhan Batu, library branding is formed through a digital and social approach that emphasizes the image as a modern and open literacy center. When this identity is successfully embedded in public perception, the library becomes not only a place to read, but also an active, fun, and relevant social space to the needs of today's society.

The branding strategy implemented by the Regional Library of South Labuhan Batu Regency shows a strong understanding of the importance of public image in building community engagement with reading culture. Strengthening branding through social media such as Instagram, Facebook, and the official website is the main tool to reach various segments of society. The use of social media not only provides efficiency in terms of cost and time, but also creates an interactive space that allows two-way communication between the library and the community. Literacy programs such as writing competitions, book reviews, digital training, and innovations such as providing mini cinemas are part of the strategy to create a fun and attractive literacy experience. In addition, collaboration with more than 20 schools and local literacy communities strengthens the reach and involvement of the community in every activity initiated by the library. The fast response to direct messages (DM) on social media shows the responsiveness of the institution in building personal and close relationships with its users.

The implementation of this branding strategy is inseparable from various structural and cultural challenges. One of the main obstacles is the limited technological infrastructure in remote areas, which makes the distribution of information through digital media uneven. Low digital literacy and limited internet access hinder the optimization of promotion and community participation as a whole. In addition, limited human resources in terms of managing creative content and social media are also significant obstacles. The continued conservative perception of libraries as formal and boring spaces requires an innovative and contextual communication approach to be changed. Administrative challenges and budget constraints further complicate the ideal branding process. However, the high commitment of the library to continue to innovate and collaborate across sectors shows that this transformation is moving in a progressive direction. Thus, library branding is not only a promotional tool, but also a transformational strategy to reshape the role of libraries as centers of learning and community empowerment.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the library branding strategy in South Labuhan Batu Regency has made a significant contribution to increasing public interest in reading. Branding is not only understood as an effort to promote visuals or logos alone, but as a comprehensive strategy that builds image, identity, and positive user experiences. The branding approach taken includes optimizing social media, developing innovative services such as mini cinema, and collaborating with schools and literacy communities. Through this strategy, the library has succeeded in building a new perception as an inclusive, modern, and responsive literacy center to the times.

The results of the study showed an increase in visits, new member registrations, and community interaction with the library, both directly and through digital platforms. This finding supports the Brand Identity theory (Aaker, 2010) which states that consistency of values, vision, and user experience is key to building a positive image of an institution. Effective branding helps libraries form emotional attachments with the community, thus encouraging active involvement in a reading culture.

However, this study also identified various challenges that need to be overcome, including limited digital infrastructure in rural areas, low technological literacy in the community, and limited capacity of librarians in managing creative content and digital communication. In addition, the conservative perception of libraries as rigid formal spaces is still an obstacle in reaching wider segments of society. Therefore, branding needs to be accompanied by strengthening human resource capacity, increasing digital literacy, and providing adequate technological facilities, especially in remote areas.

Practically, this study recommends the need for ongoing policy support from local governments, especially in the form of adequate budget allocation for branding development, librarian training, and digital infrastructure development in rural areas. In addition, libraries need to continue to conduct periodic evaluations of branding effectiveness through community satisfaction surveys, and establish strategic collaborations with various parties to expand the reach of literacy programs.

Thus, library branding is not just a communication strategy, but an effort to transform the role of libraries as centers for learning, empowerment, and strengthening community literacy culture. This study is expected to be a model of relevant best practices to be adapted by libraries in other regions by considering their respective local contexts.

SUGGESTION

Based on the research results and field findings, there are a number of suggestions that can be put forward as recommendations for further development in both theoretical, practical, and policy aspects.

First, from a theoretical perspective, it is necessary to strengthen the branding approach in the context of literacy and libraries as part of the development of library and information science. This study has proven that brand identity plays a strategic role in shaping perceptions and increasing public participation in libraries. Therefore, further research is recommended to expand the theoretical framework of library branding by integrating concepts from communication science, social marketing, and community participation theory. Further researchers are also expected to use mixed methods or a longitudinal approach to gain a deeper and more time-dimensional understanding of changes in public perception of the library image.

Second, in a practical context, regional library managers need to develop a more systematic and planned branding strategy. Branding is not just about momentary promotion, but needs to be carried out sustainably by targeting all segments of society, including children, adolescents, adults, and vulnerable groups. Librarians and library staff should be equipped with training in public communication, social media management, and creative digital content production, so that they are able to build a positive narrative about libraries in digital spaces that are of interest to the public.

In addition, there needs to be the development of service innovations that are relevant to the needs of local communities. For example, expanding community-based literacy programs, building digital reading corners in villages, or holding literacy-based skills classes. Innovations such as the mini cinema carried out by the South Labuhan Batu Library have proven to be successful in increasing the attractiveness of visits, and can be replicated with local adaptations by other libraries.

Third, from a policy perspective, local governments are expected to provide concrete support for library branding programs through increased budgets, supporting regulations, and cross-sector synergies. Without structural support, branding will be difficult to carry out optimally, especially in areas with limited infrastructure. It is recommended that library branding be included in regional development priorities in the areas of increasing literacy and strengthening human resources. The government also needs to encourage collaboration between libraries and schools, universities, literacy communities, and religious organizations as part of an inclusive literacy ecosystem.

Finally, researchers recommend periodic evaluation of library branding strategies, either through community satisfaction surveys, analysis of social media interactions, or public dialogue forums. This evaluation is important to determine the effectiveness of branding campaigns and to improve aspects that are not yet optimal.

By implementing these suggestions, libraries will not only function as providers of books, but will become dynamic, participatory institutions, and capable of becoming centers of lifelong learning that are adaptive to the challenges of the digital age.

THANK YOU-NOTE

The author would like to express his gratitude to all parties who have provided support in this research process. Special thanks are given to the South Labuhan Batu Regency Library Service for their cooperation, data, and information provided. The author would also like to thank the informants who were willing to share their experiences and views openly. Thanks are also given to the supervisor and fellow academics who have provided constructive input during the writing process. Hopefully, the results of this study can provide real contributions to the development of literacy and strengthening the role of libraries in the regions.

REFERENCES

- Antasari, I. W., Setyowulandari, Y., & Ningrum, A. K. (2021). Efektivitas Promosi Layanan Perpustakaan di Masa Pandemi Covid19 Melalui Webinar. *BIBLIOTIKA: Jurnal Kajian Perpustakaan Dan Informasi*, 5(2). <https://doi.org/10.17977/um008v5i22021p87-93>
- Atika, M., & Sayekti, R. (2023). Studi Literatur Review Sistem Informasi Perpustakaan Berbasis Artificial Intelligence (AI). *Palimpsest: Jurnal Ilmu Informasi Dan Perpustakaan*, 14(1). <https://doi.org/10.20473/pjil.v14i1.46405>

- Bakti, D. R. S. N. A. (2020). Optimalisasi Peningkatan dan Penguatan Citra Perpustakaan melalui Peran Aktif Pustakawan dalam Aplikasi Teknologi Informasi Komunikasi (TIK). *Tibannbaru: Jurnal Ilmu Perpustakaan Dan Informasi*, 4(1).
- Fadhli, R., Indah, R. N., Widya, N., & Oktaviani, W. (2020). STRATEGI PERPUSTAKAAN SEKOLAH DASAR DALAM MENGEMBANGKAN EMOTIONAL BRANDING MELALUI STORYTELLING. *JMIE (Journal of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Education)*, 4(1). <https://doi.org/10.32934/jmie.v4i1.172>
- Firah, A. L., Wahyuni, D., & Daoed, T. S. (2022). STRATEGI PENGUATAN LITERASI INFORMASI UNTUK MEWUJUDKAN GERAKAN MIGECA (MILENIAL GEMAR BACA) MASYARAKAT PADA KARANG TARUNA *Martabe: Jurnal ...*
- Firman, Sukirman, Aswar, N., & Mirnawati, M. (2021). Pengaruh Beberapa Faktor Determinan terhadap Peningkatan Minat Baca Mahasiswa. *Jurnal Onoma: Pendidikan, Bahasa, Dan Sastra*, 7(1). <https://doi.org/10.30605/onoma.v7i1.462>
- Flick, U. (2020). Doing Triangulation and Mixed Methods. In *Doing Triangulation and Mixed Methods*. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781529716634>
- Guarango, P. M. (2022). Standar Pelayanan Publik Pada Perpustakaan Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 4 Aceh Besar. *Jurnal Departemen Administrasi Publik Fakultas Ilmu Sosial Dan Ilmu Politik, Universitas Diponegoro.*, 7(8.5.2017).
- Husna, A. N., Yuliani, D., Rachmawati, T., Anggraini, D. E., Anwar, R., & Utomo, R. (2021). Program Literasi Digital untuk Pengembangan Perpustakaan Berbasis Inklusi Sosial di Desa Sedayu, Muntilan, Magelang. *Community Empowerment*, 6(2). <https://doi.org/10.31603/ce.4259>
- Machromah, I. U., Mahendra, A., Dianingsih, F. R., Indriani, N., Agustina, D. R., Fatimah, S., Arifah, N. Z. M., Khusna, M. Al, Novianto, D., Nugroho, F. C., & Zainuddin, A. (2020). Perpustakaan Dinding sebagai Program Gerakan Literasi Sekolah untuk Meningkatkan Kemampuan Membaca Siswa MI Muhammadiyah Kuncen Cawas, Klaten. *Buletin KKN Pendidikan*, 2(2). <https://doi.org/10.23917/bkkndik.v2i2.10796>
- Mahardhika Chandra, Rizki Pratama, Fathan Azka Pradana, & Alvita Bonita. (2022). Chatbot Interaksi Rumah Sakit menggunakan FFNN. *Indonesian Journal of Data and Science*, 3(1). <https://doi.org/10.56705/ijodas.v3i1.36>
- Miles, M. & Huberman, S. J. (2016). *Qualitative data analysis: A Methods Sourcebook*. In *Nursing standard (Royal College of Nursing (Great Britain) : 1987) (Vol. 30, Issue 25)*.
- Nurhayati, L. (2022). Branding Akun Media Sosial Perpustakaan sebagai Strategi Promosi Perpustakaan di Era Digital. *Program Studi Ilmu Perpustakaan, Fakultas Ilmu Budaya, Universitas Diponegoro*.
- Nurhayani, N., Syam, A. M., & Fahri, Z. (2024). Strategi Pustakawan Dalam Mengembangkan Minat Baca Siswa Di SMA Negeri 4 Kota Tebing Tinggi. *Triwikrama: Jurnal Ilmu Sosial*, 3(6), 11-20.
- Pratiwi, R. A., Ritonga, S., & Syam, A. M. (2024). Strategi Perpustakaan Dalam Meningkatkan Aksesibilitas Layanan Kepada Anak Tunanetra Di Sekolah Dasar Luar Biasa Negeri (SDLBN) 117709 Kampung Baru Labuhan Batu. *CENDEKIA: Jurnal Ilmu Sosial, Bahasa dan Pendidikan*, 4(1), 272-288.
- Rahayu, H. S. (2023). Strategi Komunikasi Publik Pemerintah di Masa Pandemi COVID-19. *IKOMIK: Jurnal Ilmu Komunikasi Dan Informasi*, 3(1). <https://doi.org/10.33830/ikomik.v3i1.3756>
- Reynaldi, M., & Halim, M. (2022). TAMAN BACA MASYARAKAT ROROTAN UNTUK MENINGKATKAN MINAT BACA MASYARAKAT. *Jurnal Sains, Teknologi, Urban*,

- Perancangan, Arsitektur (Stupa), 4(1). <https://doi.org/10.24912/stupa.v4i1.16933>
- Sardana, N., Shekoohi, S., Cornett, E. M., & Kaye, A. D. (2023). Qualitative and quantitative research methods. In *Substance Use and Addiction Research: Methodology, Mechanisms, and Therapeutics*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-323-98814-8.00008-1>
- Semiarty, R., Chaniago, W., Kurnia, Y., & Qalbi, A. M. (2022). IMPLEMENTASI KOLABORASI PENTAHHELIX UNTUK MENINGKATKAN MINAT BACA DI KOTO PARAK KELURAHAN PISANG KECAMATAN PAUH KOTA PADANG. *BULETIN ILMIAH NAGARI MEMBANGUN*, 5(2). <https://doi.org/10.25077/bina.v5i2.309>
- Suharti. (2020). Layanan Perpustakaan Di Masa Pandemi Covid 19. *Buletin Perpustakaan Universitas Islam Indonesia*, 3(2).
- Sukma, H. H. (2021). STRATEGI KEGIATAN LITERASI DALAM MENINGKATKAN MINAT BACA PESERTA DIDIK DI SEKOLAH DASAR. *Jurnal VARIDIKA*, 33(1). <https://doi.org/10.23917/varidika.v33i1.13200>
- Utami, L. D. (2021). Tingkat Literasi Indonesia di Dunia Rendah, Ranking 62 Dari 70 Negara - Perpustakaan Amir Machmud. *Perpustakaan Amir Machmud*.
- Wahyuningrum, C., Anam, S., Jalil, A., Nisa, S. I., Trulyana, A., Oktahariana, A., Laila, N., Hasanah, E. I., Muddah, N. H., Rohmah, A. N., Rohmah, A. M., Afifah, E. N., Laily, A., & Hidayat, R. (2022). Peningkatan Literasi Masyarakat melalui Pojok Baca di Balai Desa Umbulrejo. *Al-Ijtimā: Jurnal Pengabdian Kepada Masyarakat*, 3(1). <https://doi.org/10.53515/aijpkm.v3i1.47>
- Zohriah, A., Firdaos, R., & Muslihat, M. (2023). Strategi Manajemen Perpustakaan dan Layanan Pemustaka. *JIIP - Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu Pendidikan*, 6(11). <https://doi.org/10.54371/jiip.v6i11.2610>