

Research Article

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Library Transformation Strategies Based on Social Inclusion to Improve Literacy and Community Empowerment in Parigi Moutong Regency, Indonesia

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Abstract: *This study examines the implementation of library transformation based on social inclusion and identifies strategic priorities for improving literacy and community empowerment at the Library and Archives Service of Parigi Moutong Regency, Indonesia. It employs a qualitative approach with a case-study design. Data were collected through interviews, observation, and document analysis involving 13 informants selected through purposive and snowball sampling. The data were analysed using a qualitative process informed by Creswell's approach, Kurt Lewin's three-stage change model, and SWOT analysis. The findings indicate that library transformation has moved beyond conventional book-lending services through literacy classes, the Motor Pintar mobile library service, Digital Reading Corners (POCADI), BI Corner, and support for village libraries. These initiatives broaden access and create opportunities for learning and skills development, although their long-term socioeconomic effects still require monitoring. Institutionalisation remains incomplete because a dedicated local regulatory framework and sustainable funding arrangements have not yet been adequately established. The reported SWOT scores are 1.58 for strengths, 0.89 for weaknesses, 1.85 for opportunities, and 0.83 for threats, producing a strategic position of (+0.69, +1.02) in Quadrant I. Recommended strategies include strengthening partnerships, expanding inclusive services, aligning literacy and skills programmes with local potential, replicating effective village-level practices, and institutionalising programmes through regulation, budgeting, and outcome monitoring.*

Keywords: *community empowerment; library transformation; literacy; social inclusion; SWOT analysis.*

Introduction

Public libraries are increasingly expected to function as accessible spaces for public learning rather than merely as repositories of books. In contemporary public administration, this shift reflects a move towards services that respond to citizens' capabilities, participation, and everyday needs. Libraries adopting a social-inclusion approach connect access to information with learning opportunities, practical skills, community participation, and the capacity to improve livelihoods. This approach is consistent with inclusive development principles, which seek to ensure that vulnerable groups are not excluded from public institutions and opportunities (United Nations, 2016).

In Indonesia, the Social Inclusion-Based Library Transformation programme (Transformasi Perpustakaan Berbasis Inklusi Sosial, or TPBIS), developed by the National Library of the Republic of Indonesia, provides a policy direction for strengthening libraries as instruments of community development. National Library Regulation No. 3 of 2023 provides a formal reference for this transformation. The challenge for local governments is to translate this policy direction into services that are accessible, relevant, and sustainable, particularly in areas with widely dispersed populations and limited public resources (National Library of the Republic of Indonesia, 2023).

Parigi Moutong Regency illustrates these challenges. Its Library and Archives Service has developed literacy classes, the Motor Pintar mobile library service, Digital Reading Corners (POCADI), BI Corner,

and village-library initiatives. Ildayani's thesis records mobile-library services at 23 service points across a regency comprising 278 villages, as well as the participation of 10 village libraries in TPBIS development. Literacy activities include religious studies, English, mathematics, handicrafts and knitting, computer skills, and calligraphy. Together, these initiatives indicate a shift away from a building-centred model towards services intended to respond to community needs beyond the main library.

Nevertheless, the existence of programmes and facilities does not automatically produce sustained use or measurable improvements in literacy. The thesis reports a Community Literacy Development Index (Indeks Pembangunan Literasi Masyarakat, IPLM) score of 39.35 for Parigi Moutong Regency in 2024. Visits to the fixed library service also declined from 14,046 in 2024 to 9,440 in 2025, a reduction of 4,606 visits (approximately 32.8%). The 2026 figure of 3,996 visitors covers only the first five months and therefore cannot be directly compared with full-year figures. These data underline the need to assess the relationship between service innovation, community participation, and institutional sustainability rather than treating programme availability as proof of successful transformation.

Organisational change theory helps explain this process. Lewin's model describes change through three stages—unfreezing, changing, and refreezing: developing stakeholders' awareness of the need for change, implementing new practices, and stabilising those practices within organisational routines (Lewin, 1947). In public libraries, this framework draws attention not only to new services but also to organisational readiness, the participation of librarians and communities, and the systems needed to sustain change. The New Public Service perspective similarly regards citizens as participants in public life rather than merely as service customers (Denhardt & Denhardt, 2003).

Previous studies cited in the thesis have examined inclusive library transformation through strategic management, service innovation, librarians' perceptions, and empowerment through village libraries. One related study, for example, describes how social inclusion can help regional libraries develop flexible services based on community information needs (Kurniasih & Saefullah, 2021). The present study adds a local-government perspective by connecting stages of organisational change, strategic positioning through SWOT analysis, and an implementation roadmap. It addresses two questions: how is social inclusion-based library transformation implemented in Parigi Moutong Regency, and which strategies should be prioritised to strengthen literacy and community empowerment? Its contribution is an integrated analysis of the change process and strategic choices, while recognising that qualitative evidence alone does not establish a causal effect on income or literacy outcomes.

Method

This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach and a case-study design focused on the Library and Archives Service of Parigi Moutong Regency and village libraries participating in social inclusion-based transformation. A case-study design was selected because the research examines organisational processes within their administrative and community contexts (Yin, 2018).

Thirteen informants were selected through purposive and snowball sampling. As reported in the thesis, they included the Head of the Library and Archives Service, the Head of Library Services and Development, librarians, managers of village libraries participating in TPBIS, and community or programme stakeholders. Informants were selected based on their knowledge of and direct involvement in policy, service delivery, programme management, or implementation at community level.

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, observation, and document analysis. The interview guide covered Lewin's three stages of change, the delivery of inclusive services, community

participation, supporting and inhibiting factors, and internal and external factors relevant to strategy formulation. Documents included institutional and programme information, service-use data, and strategic assessment tables reported in the thesis. Qualitative analysis informed by Creswell and Poth (2018) involved organising the data, coding and grouping information, identifying patterns, interpreting findings, and drawing conclusions. Findings were examined through the unfreezing–changing–refreezing framework.

SWOT analysis was used to identify internal strengths and weaknesses and external opportunities and threats. The thesis reports aggregate IFAS and EFAS results and strategic coordinates of (+0.69, +1.02), calculated by subtracting weaknesses from strengths and threats from opportunities. These coordinates place the agency in Quadrant I and support an expansion-oriented strengths–opportunities (SO) strategy. This article presents the aggregate scores as reported in the thesis and does not reconstruct the weight assigned to each individual factor. To maintain interpretive accuracy, programme reach and participation are distinguished from proven long-term impacts. The study does not claim statistically established causal relationships.

Results and Discussion

Transformation Through Three Stages of Organisational Change

The findings indicate that library transformation in Parigi Moutong Regency has involved a gradual shift from conventional collection-centred services towards a more community-oriented model. The change is evident in outreach services, learning activities, digital access points, and support for village libraries. Lewin's framework helps explain both the progress achieved and the institutional work that remains.

Unfreezing: Recognising the Need for Change

The unfreezing stage was driven by recognition that conventional service arrangements were insufficient to reach all residents. The thesis identifies the 2024 IPLM score of 39.35, the geographical challenge of serving 278 villages, and changing information-seeking behaviour in a digital environment as important reasons to review existing practices. The decline in fixed-library visits between 2024 and 2025 also suggests that the main building and conventional service model alone have not been sufficient to sustain public engagement. These conditions provide a rationale for expanding outreach, diversifying literacy activities, and building partnerships that connect library resources with community spaces.

From a change-management perspective, unfreezing involves more than acknowledging low indicators. It requires shared understanding among leaders, librarians, village partners, and residents about why service changes are necessary. The available evidence suggests that the institution has identified access and participation challenges. Further improvement should be supported by routine mechanisms for assessing community needs, segmenting user data, and demonstrating how residents' feedback influences programme design.

Changing: Implementing Inclusive and Diverse Services

The changing stage is visible in several complementary initiatives. First, the agency provides six types of literacy classes covering religious studies, English, mathematics, handicrafts and knitting, computer skills, and calligraphy. This range suggests an understanding that literacy extends beyond reading to include learning, creativity, and practical skills. To remain relevant, topics and schedules should continue to reflect residents' interests, local livelihood opportunities, and barriers to participation.

Second, Motor Pintar and other mobile-library services bring reading materials closer to communities. The thesis reports services at 23 points across a regency comprising 278 villages. Outreach is important when distance, transport costs, and unequal access to facilities limit visits to the main library. This coverage also requires clear service schedules, prioritisation of areas, and coordination with schools, village governments, community groups, and local libraries.

Third, POCADI and BI Corner provide digital or specialised reading access at locations outside conventional library premises. These initiatives expand access points to library resources and can connect information services with residents' everyday activities. Their benefits depend on equipment and connectivity, access to content, support for users with limited digital skills, and monitoring of actual use—not merely recording the installation of facilities.

Fourth, the involvement of 10 village libraries extends transformation to the community level. The thesis describes local participation and initiatives involving Family Welfare Movement (PKK) groups, youth organisations (Karang Taruna), and micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs). These relationships can make libraries learning spaces that are closely connected to community life. However, sustainable village-level models require clear role allocation, basic operating resources, trained managers, continuity of activities, and working relationships with the regency-level agency.

Taken together, these services demonstrate a change in orientation: libraries are positioned as platforms for learning, information access, skills development, and participation. However, the visitor data reported in the thesis caution that an increase in programmes does not necessarily lead to increased visits to the main building. Outreach services may reach residents who previously did not visit the central library, while the available indicators do not capture all participation in mobile, digital, and village-level services. Evaluation should therefore combine visits to the main library, attendance at outreach activities, repeat participation, user feedback, and evidence of skills acquired or applied.

Refreezing: Sustaining and Institutionalising Change

The refreezing stage appears to be emerging at the social level. The thesis describes community participation and local self-help initiatives, particularly through village libraries and community groups. This is important because it suggests that activities may become part of local routines rather than remaining initiatives driven exclusively by the agency. Shared ownership can strengthen legitimacy and help services adapt to local needs.

Formal institutionalisation, however, remains a vulnerable point. The thesis identifies the absence of a dedicated local regulation, such as a regent regulation or regional regulation, specifically supporting social inclusion-based library transformation. Without a clear policy basis, defined responsibilities, sustained budget commitments, and routine performance evaluation, programme continuity may depend on annual budgets and leadership priorities. In Lewin's framework, social acceptance is insufficient if administrative systems do not reinforce new practices. Refreezing should therefore be understood as both cultural adoption and formal consolidation.

SWOT Position and Strategic Implications

The thesis reports the following aggregate SWOT scores: strengths of 1.58 and weaknesses of 0.89, producing an internal coordinate of +0.69; opportunities of 1.85 and threats of 0.83, producing an external coordinate of +1.02. The resulting coordinates of (+0.69, +1.02) place the agency in Quadrant I, generally indicating that internal strengths can be used to pursue external opportunities. Accordingly, the thesis recommends an expansion- and growth-oriented SO strategy.

Table 1. Aggregate SWOT scores and strategic interpretation

SWOT component	Score	Interpretation
Strengths	1.58	Existing services, organisational commitment, and community initiatives provide a basis for development.
Weaknesses	0.89	Service reach, institutional support, and sustainability need further strengthening.
Opportunities	1.85	Partnerships, national policy support, digital services, and village networks can be leveraged.
Threats	0.83	Budget uncertainty and leadership changes may disrupt continuity.
Strategic coordinates	(+0.69, +1.02)	Quadrant I; prioritise SO expansion while managing institutional risks.

Source: Ildayani's thesis

A Quadrant I position supports expansion, but it does not mean that implementation risks have disappeared. The scores for weaknesses and threats continue to represent practical constraints, particularly the absence of dedicated local regulation and uncertainty about programme sustainability. The SO strategy should therefore be accompanied by safeguards that reduce vulnerability to budget changes and leadership turnover.

Strategic Priorities and Implementation Roadmap

The following priorities synthesise the SO orientation in the thesis with recommendations to strengthen partnerships, expand inclusive services, develop literacy activities based on local potential, replicate effective practices, and reinforce institutional support. The roadmap translates the strategic direction into manageable phases.

Table 2. Proposed implementation roadmap based on the study findings.

Phase	Priority actions	Initial indicators and institutional focus
Short term (0–6 months)	Map user needs; review service and visitor data; establish a TPBIS coordination team; agree on schedules with village partners.	Baseline profiles available; schedules published; partner roles documented. Focus: coordination and evidence-based planning.
Medium term (6–18 months)	Expand literacy and skills classes; strengthen Motor Pintar, POCADI, BI Corner, and support for village libraries; formalise partnerships.	Activities delivered; attendance and repeat participation recorded; feedback reviewed. Focus: service quality, access, and partnerships.
Long term (18–36 months)	Propose local regulatory support; incorporate programme needs into annual planning and budgets;	Regulatory progress; budget allocation; active village services; documented learning or skills outcomes. Focus: sustainability,

Phase	Priority actions	Initial indicators and institutional focus
	replicate effective village practices; assess results.	accountability, and institutionalisation.

Implementation should be supported by a concise monitoring framework. At the input and process levels, the agency can record budgets, staff, partner contributions, scheduled activities, and service coverage. At the output level, it can record attendance by service type, repeat participation, use of digital services, and the number of active village-library activities. At the outcome level, evaluation should use appropriate evidence of improved information skills, application of skills, community initiatives, or other locally relevant benefits. The IPLM can be retained as a contextual indicator, but changes in the index should not be attributed to a single programme without an adequate evaluation design.

Theoretical and Practical Contributions

This case contributes to public administration research by showing that organisational transformation in a regional library has at least three interconnected dimensions. First, unfreezing is prompted by a mismatch between conventional service arrangements and the needs of geographically dispersed residents. Second, changing occurs through a set of services combining outreach, digital access, literacy education, and village-level participation. Third, refreezing requires both community ownership and administrative institutionalisation. SWOT analysis can help establish priorities, but its practical value depends on linking diagnosis to actions, indicators, and realistic timelines.

For practitioners, the principal implication is that transformation should be managed as a sustainable public-service system rather than as a series of separate activities. Programme design, service delivery, community feedback, budget planning, and evaluation need to reinforce one another. A local policy framework and predictable funding are particularly important to protect programmes from shifts in annual priorities. Strategies should also make inclusion operational by providing appropriate service options for groups facing geographical, economic, age-related, or digital barriers.

Research Limitations

This study was conducted in one regency and involved 13 informants; applying its findings to other contexts therefore requires consideration of institutional and geographical differences. The article uses qualitative evidence and aggregate SWOT scores reported in the thesis. Available visitor data focus on fixed-site services and do not fully represent the reach of mobile, digital, and village-library services. The 2026 data cover only five months. In addition, although the study identifies possible contributions to literacy and empowerment, it does not use a longitudinal or experimental design to estimate causal effects on literacy scores, income, or well-being. Future evaluations should combine qualitative evidence with consistent service and outcome data.

Conclusion

Social inclusion-based library transformation in Parigi Moutong Regency has moved beyond conventional library services through literacy classes, Motor Pintar and other mobile-library services, POCADI, BI Corner, and support for village libraries. Viewed through Lewin's model, the need for change has been recognised, new service practices have been introduced, and community participation suggests that some changes are beginning to take root locally. However, formal institutionalisation remains

incomplete because a dedicated local regulatory framework and reliable long-term funding arrangements have not yet been adequately established.

The SWOT scores reported in the thesis—strengths of 1.58, weaknesses of 0.89, opportunities of 1.85, and threats of 0.83—produce strategic coordinates of (+0.69, +1.02), placing the agency in Quadrant I and supporting an SO-oriented expansion strategy. Recommended priorities include strengthening partnerships, expanding accessible services, developing literacy and practical-skills activities aligned with local potential, replicating effective village-level practices, and reinforcing policy and budget support. These priorities should be accompanied by routine monitoring that distinguishes service outputs from long-term outcomes. In this way, libraries can strengthen their role as inclusive public institutions that support lifelong learning and community capabilities.

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